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Tales of Tirah and Lesser Tibet



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{Frontispiece

Tales of Tirah and Lesser Tibet

BY

LILIAN A. STARR
OF PESHAWAR

WITH FOREWORDS BY
LORD RAWLINSON & SIR JOHN MAFFEY

EDITED, WITH AN APPRECIATION, BY
BASIL MATHEWS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
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Dedication

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS
DEDICATED TO
THE HONOURABLE
SIR JOHN MAFFEY
K.C.V.O., C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.
IN GRATITUDE TO HIM
FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY
OF RENDERING SERVICE

Foreword

THE object which the writer of this book has in view is worthy of every support, and it is for this reason that I am only too glad to meet her wishes by writing a few lines as a Foreword.

The Peshawar Mission Hospital has already brought relief to many of the suffering tribesmen not only of the North-west Frontier, but from districts farther afield in the wilds of Central Asia. It is in need of funds to carry on its work of charity and good-will. May it continue to prosper, and may this little book meet with the success it deserves at the hands of the reading public.

RAWLINSON.

August 2, 1923.

An Appreciation

IN the absence of Mrs. Starr at her work in the Frontier Hospital at Peshawar it has fallen to me, at her desire, to edit this book and to see it through the press.

It has seemed to be necessary and right that an outline of Mrs. Starr's life should be given here ; even though I fear that she might, if consulted, have desired that nothing should be written on that score. But in no other way is it possible to get an adequate idea of the background for the events of a journey that has now become an imperishable episode in the turbulent dramatic history of the North-west Frontier of India.

In 1922 Mrs. Starr spent a vacation penetrating into Lesser Tibet. The unstudied diary of that journey, written simply for her mother and personal friends, constitutes the middle portion of this book. Writing to me from Peshawar about this story of the journey into Lesser Tibet, Mrs. Starr says :

“I never thought of it for publication. I used a good many Indian words, as my people would understand them.”

It has seemed best to leave the MS. practically unaltered, save by the excision here and there of purely personal references that have no meaning except to intimate friends. Indeed, in some respects, we are all the happier in having a narrative simply jotted down for the eyes of friends. What we lose in—to use Mrs. Starr’s word—“composition,” we gain in the directness and vividness of the story. In order to avoid the alteration of the Indian words that Mrs. Starr used in writing the diary for her mother (most of whose life has been spent in the service of India), a glossary has been added to the book.

In 1923 came the tragic raid on the bungalow at Kohat, followed by Mrs. Starr’s journey into Tirah to rescue Miss Ellis. The story Mrs. Starr tells here in the third part of this book. She characteristically gives to the Rissaldar who accompanied her the full credit due to him for his splendid work throughout—as she does also to Kuli Khan for his; while Sir John Maffey’s fine, decisive

generalship is clearly brought out. As she shows, it was the perfect team-work that won victory out of the very jaws of tragedy. What does not appear in Mrs. Starr's story is that she started out not only knowing that there was the risk that she might not return at all, but with the purpose, if the full rescue failed, of remaining among the Afridi as a hostage for the freedom of Miss Ellis.

It is not easy to recall any parallel to the poignant personal anxiety that kept the people of the British Empire waiting on tiptoe for news of Miss Mollie Ellis, whom the Afridi brigands had seized and carried off into the wilds of Tirah, on the Afghan frontier, after slaying her mother. The feeling was all the more tense because no military force, however great, could effect any rescue. On the contrary, an expeditionary attack could only issue in deeper tragedy.

Who will ever forget the thrill of reading the simple announcement that a woman—Mrs. Starr, of the Peshawar Hospital—had undertaken to go into the wilds to try to effect that rescue which the forces of the Empire could not even attempt. There was the waiting day after day to hear whether

the impossible had been achieved. Then came the joy at the news that in real life a victory had been won beyond the dreams of romance.

It was an act at once sublime and simple. It combined—when seen against the wild background of the Afghan hinterland—an epic grandeur of outline with a startling domesticity of detail. Seen against the background of the lives of Mrs. Starr's father and mother and the life and death of doctor-husband, it was the splendid climax of sixty years given by four lives to the service of God and man on the North-west Frontier. It blended the heroism of romance with the performance of the ordinary duty of the hospital. And that fact itself throws a flash of light not only on the occasion, but on Mrs. Starr; for the rescue was literally just the extension of the normal motive and habit of life of a nursing-sister into a region of dramatic urgency and peril.

It is indeed characteristic of the cool, intrepid preparedness that marked the whole action that Mrs. Starr took not only her life in her hand—but her camera!

What then, in briefest outline, is the

life-story—or rather what are the life-stories—that lie behind the deed?

It is curious with what dramatic unity the record centres in the capital of the North-west Frontier at the foot of the Khyber Pass—Peshawar. For the story begins really sixty years back when in January 1863 Thomas Russell Wade, Mrs. Starr's father, sailed for Calcutta and went on to Peshawar, where he at once threw himself into work that left a permanent mark on the place and people. That work had itself been initiated in Peshawar at the instance of some keen Army officers, who held that Peshawar should be held as an outpost not only of the British Raj, but of the Christian enterprise. The peril of such work among wild, passionate men was obvious. One officer entered his name on the subscription list for "one rupee towards a revolver for the first missionary." Wade went calmly about in the bazaar of fanatical Peshawar. Again and again he had narrow escapes from Afghans who wanted to get their knives into him. His "munshi," who was an Afghan, would not walk with him in the city for fear of his life. But Wade walked there humorous, cheerful, courtly and irre-

sistibly dignified, and his personality won him great respect and even affection from Pathans who detested his faith.

Moving into Kashmir, he worked at Lahore and elsewhere for some years, till in 1881 he was stationed at Amritsar--the Benares or Mecca of the Sikhs and a metropolis of the traders from Baluchistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. In the following year he married Miss Anna E. Blake, a missionary of the Church of England Zenana Medical Missionary Society. Two daughters were born to them.

The younger, Lilian, was born in the beautiful hill-station of Dalhousie in the Himalayas, and her eyes first looked out on the grandeur of that incomparable scenery.

She shared with her sister during the years at Amritsar the careful home training of her mother and an English governess. Her education in England began at the age of ten, when her parents returned to India after furlough, and was happy and full of interest, especially the later years at Oakhill House, Hampstead, where the Principal, Miss Thompson, of Westfield College, exercised a strong influence over her senior girls.

An Appreciation

At the age of eighteen Miss Lilian Wade rejoined her father and mother in India, and during three years spent in Lahore, Batala, and Amritsar she for the first time watched the people and felt their needs. A vocation for nursing quickened in her, and she wished to prepare herself by a thorough training for the work of a missionary nursing-sister. She therefore returned to England and received the greater part of her nursing training at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. This was followed by special medical courses in London and in Birmingham ; while some months were spent at Kennaway Hall (then "The Willows") for special Bible study. So she sailed in the autumn of 1913 from England for India as an honorary self-supporting member of the Church Missionary Society Medical Mission. In November she reached the C.M.S. Hospital at the frontier station at Peshawar, the city which her father had entered as a young man precisely fifty years earlier, and where his memory was still vivid in the minds of the older men of the frontier post. The extraordinary if not unique character of the work of that hospital, with its sister-hospitals at the foot of the other passes, can

be gathered from the descriptions in the first and third parts of this book.

At the hospital was Dr. Vernon Harold Starr, a young physician and surgeon who had been there since the beginning of 1911. As Mrs. Starr put it in her biography of her husband, "Not many days after her arrival he felt that she would be a help to him in other ways beside the work ; but it was not till February of 1915 that they became engaged." In May 1914 Dr. Starr took over the entire charge of the hospital.

In October 1915 they were married in the beautiful Oriental mission-church in the city. For seventeen more months they worked together in the hospital. Then came another tragic happening in the stormy story of the frontier. At 4 a.m. in the night of Saturday to Sunday, March 16-17, 1917, Dr. Vernon Starr was awakened by men with a lantern at his bedroom window. He told them to go to the side-door and went quickly out to them. His wife heard him shout and rushed to the door. Staggering back into the room, Dr. Starr cried, "I am stabbed," and fell to the floor. The men were rushing away down the garden-path, still carrying the light.

He was immediately operated upon by the civil doctor ; but in two hours he was gone. The motive of the crime appears to have been a wild distortion of the blood-feud code which rules the Afghan frontier. A Pathan boy had, after treatment at the hospital, become an inquirer with a view to becoming a Christian. His fanatical Moslem father killed the boy because of his new belief, and then, it seems, revenged the death on the head of the hospital.

Mrs. Starr left India in the autumn of that same year and sailed to Egypt, where she joined the staff of the Indian Military Hospital near Cairo. She served there till after the Armistice, and then sailed for England to her mother, who lives at Eastbourne. Her addresses on medical work thrilled her hearers, and among them Her Majesty the Queen, who not only talked with Mrs. Starr, but has since taken a practical interest in her work.

After this furlough, however, Mrs. Starr felt that she could not stay, but must go back to her border folk. "The autumn of 1920," her mother writes to me, "found her anxious to return to Peshawar to continue

the work among the tribespeople, and thus to show in practice 'the Christian revenge' in contrast to the system of blood-feuds, or 'vendetta,' prevalent without exception among all the frontier tribes." She volunteered to the Church Missionary Society for service in India, and asked to be allowed to take up work again at the hospital where her husband had laid down his life and in the city where her father had begun his long life-work.

It was there, at the daily work of serving with skilled and gentle hands the wild untamed folk of the turbulent frontier tribes, showing them, in the quiet courage and mercy of the hospital ward, a more excellent way, that the call came to the adventure in Tirah.

BASIL MATHEWS.

Armistice Day, 1923.

Author's Foreword

I HAVE no desire to write my doings. The only reason this small book is put before the public is because it has been asked for. It is merely a Tale of the Lesser Tibet trek in 1922, and the Tirah trek in 1923. Indeed, the former was never written for publication at all, and the latter is simply a detailed repetition of events from an exact diary in which all conversations and happenings were noted at the time. It has no pretensions to be more than a diary, and has been very quickly put together for the Press.

For very kindly writing the Forewords in this book my most grateful thanks are due to His Excellency Lord Rawlinson, Commander-in-Chief in India, and to the Honourable Sir John Maffey, Chief Commissioner of the North-west Frontier Province. I am also deeply indebted to Mr. Basil Mathews, without whose help in editing and superintending the publishing for me in England I

could not have found time to print these pages at all.

L. A. STARR.

C.M.S. HOSPITAL,
PESHAWAR,
NORTH-WEST FRONTIER.

September 1, 1923.

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The Lands and the Peoples

IT is a far cry between Tirah, that strip of land between the North-west Frontier of British India and Afghanistan, to Lesser Tibet, lying away to the north-east of our Indian Empire, between Kashmir and the great ranges of the Himalayas, and the greater Tibet still farther beyond forming the very heart of Asia.

And yet there are differences greater than that of geographical position ; indeed, the two countries are a very study in contrasts, and their people differ in as wide and varying a degree as perhaps it is possible to find the world over.

Both lands have this in common : they are shut in—and off—from the great world outside, separated by huge mountain barriers, their ranges forming a natural wall whose summits vary from ten to twenty-six thousand feet. And so, while through recent centuries nations have sprung up and declined, wars have come and devastated

peoples and altered the history of Japan, of South Africa, of half Europe, even the rumour of war has hardly penetrated into these close lands of Asia, unchanged as of old.

Tirah is even more closed to outside influences than Tibet, for while in the former there is no desire for advance or development along the lines of Western learning, in Tibet itself we hear of a recent request for schools where English shall be taught, and Tibetan boys of high birth are being sent to other countries for education. The same thing is happening in Afghanistan, from which the boys of nobility, including the Amir's son and heir, are being distributed in Germany, France, and England, where they will doubtless learn many new things.

In Tirah there is no such ambition, as yet no hint of an awakening to a desire to be a nation and not a mere collection of inter-warring tribes, as yet no hint of a national existence independent of and yet in harmony with the two great Powers between which the fates have placed this land. Indeed, rather, the people guard their country with a jealousy which forbids traders and travellers—or even those who

would come to make friends and help their sick—to enter.

A great "No Admission" is written across those rugged hills of the Frontier. Beyond the British Border there are no railways or navigable rivers, and no roads except where the British have made them. There are no police beyond the frontier. It is an abode of outlaws, the unwritten law is "Might is Right," and the pride of the people is that they have never known a master and never will. There are no hospitals for the poor, for medical science is unknown, and mercy a despised quality. There are no schools but those of the Mullahs, or priests of Islam, for the teaching of "the holy Quran." There is no desire for education on the part of the young men of the country, whose aims are mainly two—to possess more cattle or camels for trading purposes, and to be a more accurate shot than their neighbours and relations for attack or self-defence as often as that may be needed.

With some looting is a pastime, with others a profession. The Pathan tribes of the Afghan Border are expert thieves, they

indulge freely in raids ; and that “ practice makes perfect ” is as true a maxim in this fine art as in any other. Although all true sons of Islam, they regard travellers, especially those with weak escort, as their lawful God-given prey. Without the loot of passing caravans and the raiding of their prosperous Indian neighbours, how should they live in No-man’s-land ? The bare brown rocky hill-sides, frowning down on either hand, are the allies of these plunderers, so no one marches without an armed escort, each man carrying the heavy old matchlock, a stolen rifle, or at least a dagger or large curved sword.

The political relations of the tribes with the people of administered India are controlled by political officers who do their work through the agency of the tribal jirgas, or councils of elders.

The inhabitants of this tribal tract are entirely independent ; for reparation for offences committed within our borders we have to depend solely upon armed force or political pressure upon the jirgas, and thus it happens that the tribal marauder who remains in Tirah often remains unpunished.

Extremes meet on the Frontier. In the

various cantonment stations such as Pesha-war, Bannu, and Kohat, life goes on, social and official, as in other parts of the Indian Empire, rarely broken by some terrible event similar to that which occurred in April 1923, in Kohat. It is the price of the Frontier.

The Amir from his side finds the border Pathans as great a problem and as hard to manage as the British Government on this.

The people of Tirah alone can total some three hundred thousand fighting men. These belong to clans or Khels, who live and act independently even of each other, each in their own tribal territory, and often not on friendly terms with their nearest neighbours. There are the Adam-Khels, for instance, who live in and around the Kohat Pass ; the Zakka-Khels, Khyber Afridis who live in and around the Khyber Pass ; Kumber-Khels, Kuki-Khels, Malik-Din-Khels, and so on—all Afridis, all counting Tirah as their country, yet free, separate, and independent the one of the other. Dividing the bare, forbidding mountain ranges are valleys where springs or a stream allow the people to settle and cultivate a deep oasis, dotted with brown

mud walls and turret towers where they live. Typical of this is the head of the Khanki Valley at Khanki Bazar, the only irrigated land I saw along our whole route. In winter, when the higher valleys are extremely cold, many of the people migrate, flocks and families complete, to the peaceful and fertile plains on the British side, and leave again with the long winding camel caravans at the first breath of the summer's heat, which they love no more than the Englishmen, whose work, however, keeps them at their posts, from which they can only escape for occasional short spells of leave to one or other of the cool stations among the pine forests in "the hills."

In economic value of little worth, Tirah yet remains important out of all proportion to its size, because of its position and because of its people.

The valley of Peshawar, the capital of the North-west Frontier Province, lies encircled by mountains forming a huge horseshoe, low foot-hills in front backed by great ranges covered with eternal snow. Among these lie to the north and north-east the independent territories of Dir, Swat, and

Buner, to the north and north-west Bajaur and Chitral, and behind and beyond the greater lands of Afghanistan, Turkestan, Kashmir, and to the south-east beyond the gap in the horse-shoe, British India. In this circle of hills round the Peshawar plain live the Pathans, and those in Tirah, to the west and south, are the Afridis. A slight difference in dress or speech to the initiated betrays the khel or clan to which a man belongs, yet Pushtu is the mother-tongue of all, though those who have been farther afield may know Persian or Hindustani also. Often there are as many as nine or ten different tribes or types represented at one time in the wards of the hospital at Peshawar, and five languages in use there. Even greater was the variety when I found in the little mission hospital in Leh, Ladakh, among the thirty out-patients collected there one morning, no less than eight distinct nationalities.

In physique the contrast between the Afridi of Tirah and the Ladakhi of Tibet is most marked.

The Pathan is tall and lithe, with long aquiline features and a hawk-like expression,

eyes keen, hard, and vigilant, as he always needs to be. His hair is cropped, though he may indulge in side-curls over his ears, for the Pathan is inordinately vain ; while the men of Swat and Dir wear it longer and bobbed like a girl's. He wears a long loose shirt and full baggy trousers which hang in graceful folds on his figure as he covers the country with his long swinging stride. His gun is slung across his shoulder, over which is carelessly thrown the end of his chaddar or cotton cloth, a slate-coloured sheet which is handy for many purposes. On his head is his turban with its fringed end and little peaked embroidered cap for its centre, and on his feet leather sandals or twisted grass rope-soles to be got for two annas a pair or made by his women-folk.

The Ladakhi is a contrast indeed ! Short and squat, with flat features and narrow, almond-shaped eyes, his hair shaggy and unkempt, protruding untidily from under his cap and two or three inches in length, while behind it is long and braided into a tight pigtail which makes a black greasy line all down the middle of his coat. The expression of his face is heavy, quite unlike the

cunning, quick look of the Pathan ; but when he smiles, its delightfully attractive wrinkles alter it completely. His long tunic of heavy cloth flaps round his ankles, cumbersome to walk in but warm in winter when most needed. On his feet are quaint namdah (felt) boots, after the style and shape of a baby's square-toed woollen socks in a much larger size.

The Afridi woman, as will be seen from the snapshot of myself in Malik-Din-Khel Afridi dress (page 161), wears a thoroughly sensible outfit for getting about in the hills, a full tunic to the knees, black and red, edged with coloured waxwork in the place of embroidery ; and trousers which, though very tight up to the knee, are seven feet long, wrinkling up round the leg to give additional warmth. Over the head is a black cotton chaddar with a red or red and yellow border.

The first Ladakhi lady I saw was sitting in a field among the corn, and for a moment I thought she was a bear ! She wore a long grey shapeless dress to her ankles, over her back a black goat-skin, long-haired and inside-out, and on her head a "perak," the

national head-dress. This consists of a stiff straight piece of red cloth going over the head from the forehead and down her back. It is heavy with lumps of blue turquoise matrix stone sewn on in rows ; the number she wears denotes her wealth and her worth, and if she is too poor to afford many she fills in the gaps with blue beads. Sticking out at right angles on either side of the head is a large stiff flap of black fur over which her hair is gummed in tiny tight plaits. It is this above all which gives her at a little distance a strong resemblance to a black bear, and though picturesque, it is altogether an ugly head-dress, and the most awkward one in the world to wear. The skin is always worn on the back, indeed it is quite immoral to go about without it ; if in summer it is uncomfortably hot, a large coloured shawl is substituted, hanging in graceful folds and fastened on the shoulder. The baby is often tucked inside the skin on its mother's back, where it is warm and out of the way while she bends over her work.

In character as in appearance, Pathan and Ladakhi are complete contrasts. No attempt is made here to describe their

turbulent history ; suffice it to say that the Pathan dearly loves fighting, and his very breath is a scrap with his neighbours. If not occupied in some bigger war, he will be planning a raid, perhaps over the British border, or perhaps nearer home on some neighbour to whom he owes retaliation for a fancied insult.

For the vendetta, or blood-feud system, is a chief characteristic of the Pathan, and it is carried out with a vigour and purpose worthy of a better cause. The feud may have been started by the theft of a goat or a woman (the former may be the more valuable—it depends on many things) ; but whatever its cause, once started, it will be kept up even from generation to generation, till, as has actually happened, those engaged in it do not know how it originally started !

Sometimes a truce is called on both sides, perhaps during harvest to enable the crops to be garnered ; it is marked by a large stone set up on the boundary or in some chosen spot, and the stone is broken when the time is up as a sign that the truce is broken too, whereupon hostilities recommence with renewed energy.

I have known patients in hospital insist on going out before they were fit to be discharged, because they had heard that their "badla" (blood-feud) was to be reopened shortly, and they must be back among "their ain folk" before neutrality was broken.

Recently a man came to the hospital with a large tumour, and when the doctor insisted that he must stay as an in-patient if it was to be removed, he protested, saying that before long it would be known where he was, his enemies would watch for him when he should come out of hospital, and as he had many he dared not take the risk. A few days later we heard he had taken an even greater risk, for he had had the tumour cut off by a relation of his with his dagger and, said the man who told us, "there was much blood, but he lives!" We were mildly surprised, for there is a limit to even the Pathan's physical endurance, although it is quite wonderful what many of them will face without an anaesthetic and with the utmost pluck. The other day a man insisted on having a bullet removed from the sole of his foot without chloroform, to show his relatives how brave he could be.

Quite an old man was brought to us by his son ; his leg had been shattered by a bullet, the man realised that without drastic treatment he would die of haemorrhage, and so proceeded to sever his own leg. This proving too much for him, he made his son complete the job with a sword, and then bring him down to us to have a tidy stump made.

The women are not a bit behind the men in pluck. I remember one, typical of many, who, though unable to move and unlikely to live owing to a severe bullet-wound, invariably replied to any inquiries on my part, "I am well ; I am all right." "See, she is an Afridi," said her man proudly.

Fierce and lawless, wild and masterless, yet in their reckless fashion they are brave—true highlanders with an inborn love of fighting, and a pluck and hardiness one cannot but admire. For there is something really attractive about the Afridi with his fine figure and his independent mien. And yet he *is* a blackguard, treacherous and cruel, capable sometimes of strong affection, often of a deep hatred, and an unrivalled tenacity in holding to his highest ideal, which is revenge.

Not long ago there was a young Pathan soldier of the Frontier Militia in our hospital. Such are usually sent into the army hospitals, but his women-folk had brought him in, and he was dying. After two years' absence with the regiment he had got leave to go to his village and see his people across the border. The day he arrived he was shot by an enemy who had been watching and waiting all through those two years, in the hope of getting him. Some wrong, real or imaginary, had caused a feud between the two families and revenge was a matter of honour.

Another case comes to mind—an old man with white beard and hair, and eyes filmy with cataract. He came into the out-patient hall, and when his turn came to see the doctor, he said, "I am old, but give me sight that I may use a gun again." To the doctor's query, he replied in quite a placid and natural manner: "I have not taken the exchange [revenge] for my son's death sixteen years ago."

Girls and women and even children are sometimes the deliberate victims of the blood-feud. I remember the story of one that had

been started by the theft of some goats. The injured party, A, yearned to be revenged on B. But B with his goats was wise enough to stay far up in the higher hills out of convenient reach, so as time went on, A, his enemy, got tired of waiting, and took the opportunity when the goatherd's fifteen-year-old daughter was taking supplies up to her father to shoot her instead, by which act the quarrel from A's point of view was squared and he rested content.

The sequel was that two nights later B slipped down in the night with some friends, bringing the wounded girl eventually to Peshawar, and when she reached us her condition baffled description. She had been shot through the shoulder and arm, over the wound had been firmly tied a cock cut in half, feathers and all, and over the body of the girl had been tightly drawn the skin of a goat killed and flayed for the purpose, raw and evil-smelling, and making the wound so thoroughly septic that had she been other than an Afridi she must have died.

Now, this idea of making the squaring of a quarrel a point of honour, of giving tit for tat, is not confined to the tribesmen of the

Frontier hills. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is an actual law of the ancient Jewish civilisation, and was then as much a law as is now the new ideal for which the old gave way, the latter code inaugurated by the greater Law-giver than Moses, and which we term "The Sermon on the Mount."

Here surely is our job! The world *must* be brought into line if there is to be any form of Reconstruction, and these people, living in a period centuries behind that in which we live and under the old law, must learn that there is a new order of things.

Some centuries ago the blood-feud was not unknown in practice in our own land, and many are the songs and tales that exist of the border fights between English and Scottish clans in "the good old days." It was then, as it is now with these tribesmen, a point of honour to square things up by taking the revenge. In 1400 or so the border north and south of the Tweed was the scene of many a tribal skirmish and foraging raid, and though the feud was not carried to such a point as it is among the Afridis, yet the individuals showed the same ardour for the cause, and actually committed much the

same atrocities upon their enemies. Some years ago a youth of eighteen was brought to the Peshawar Mission Hospital whose eyes had been gouged out by his enemy, into whose hands he had fallen ; recently another young man came along whose ten fingers had been cut off one by one in a similar way. To my surprise, I own, on looking through a book of ancient Scottish history, I found exactly similar cases narrated ! The change through the centuries is surely the result of civilisation, and civilisation arises from an enlightened code of morals that a people hold, which in every nation is the direct result of their religion. It is the feud system that brings in additional work to Government and mission hospitals alike, which are seldom without bullet-wound cases from across the border, and it is this ideal of revenge that is one of the problems of the frontier that the mission hospital in particular is out to tackle.

Those who run such hospitals have no illusions, be it understood, about the Pathan. They do not think of him as "the dark brother who has all on his side" or whose dirty deeds should go unpunished—far from it ; but they *are* out to give him new ideas, to

bring him from the old law to the new, which runs in its literal meaning, "play the game toward your enemies ; do good to those that hate you." By treating friend and foe alike they can show this practically, by giving their years in service and sometimes their life in death for those who literally hate the Feringhi, they are doing nothing in the least magnificent, but simply defining or explaining, by an object-lesson which the unlearned can understand, the new Law.

In no sense are these remarks disparaging to the good work of non-mission hospitals, Government, military, municipal, or any others. There is work in plenty for all, but the influence and moral power of mission hospitals should be, and probably are, correspondingly greater, because they are out to give complete treatment and not physical alone. Superstition and fatalism--mental traits—are well-known factors in retarding the healing of the body. Because man is made up of body, mind, and spirit, each inseparably linked to and influencing the others, treatment, to be entire, must mean treatment of all three, and this is peculiarly the work of medical missions. Such work has

unknowingly been given an added value in the eyes of the medical profession by the more modern science of psycho-therapy. The work of medical missions is therefore both practical and complete; it is also ideal because it follows the method of the Great Physician.

And is it the least use attempting all this?

Most tribesmen take any such service as a matter of course, a few are positively ungrateful, and take the chance of a visit to the hospital to make off with some of its property—soap, blankets, or what not; but the service is not wasted because of this. Results are not immediately apparent, perhaps, but neither are the results of the miners in trench warfare. It is the digging and tunnelling and undermining, inconspicuous, unapparent, which in the long run is absolutely necessary, for it is the miners who thus prepare a way for the rank and file to follow. Suspicion, ignorance (which result in so much maltreatment), and superstition are being undermined—and above all the almost impregnable fortress of the “Badla,” the old old law of revenge.

We asked a Pathan, shot through the knee,

but on the way to recovery, if he meant to take his revenge.

His prompt reply of "Inshah 'Allah," or "With the help of God," showed his attitude towards it. There is a perfectly natural chance for the doctor to explain, perhaps with a touch of humour which goes down so well with the Pathan, that it is possible it is not "God's will"—a new idea to him—and that therefore he may not get God's help in doing it, and that since and because of the great event of A.D. 30—the greatest event the world has ever known—there is now "a more excellent way."

Not long ago an Afridi woman, old and a grandmother, was brought to the hospital from over the Kohat Pass. Enemies had crept up in the night before dark to their fortress-home and thrown three bombs over the wall. The casualties were four killed and four injured, the former including a young woman and her six-months-old babe. The only one who reached us was this old lady, Nek Murgha by name, so badly broken up that there was small chance for her. I asked the men—sons and brother—who were with her, would they take the exchange for her life?

“ Of course, what else ? ” they said. Nine days later she died. I told them the meaning of a mission hospital, and, too, of Doctor Starr’s death, most probably at the hands of Afridis, and of the exchange *we* in particular were out to show. The brother of the dead woman turned to the others of her family who were present, and simply said, “ Shall we take the badla ? ” (revenge). That was all, and no answer was given ; but I remember at the time it crossed my mind that to make what would have been a certainty become instead a possibility was no small thing on this Frontier and justified all the work from this point of view alone, however fruitless it might seem.

Only two or three days after I returned to my usual work in hospital from the Tirah trek, I was called one afternoon down to the gate. A tall, handsome girl of eighteen, an Afriди from the Khyber Pass, lay there on a rough bed in the road, surrounded by the band of men who had carried her down.

“ Is this the place of the woman who went to Tirah ? Because it is there we go,” they said, and refused to bring the patient inside the gate till they were sure of it. The girl

had both thighs shattered and other injuries, ten wounds in all, for five bullets had gone through her. It appeared she had been in the way when some men in hiding spotted their enemy, and had paid the penalty. She too died later, and her men-folk also promised they would not take life for life.

There are, however, some grateful cases.

I have known a rough, burly Pathan, taking his small son out of hospital, say, "I will see we do not fight you English any more." He likely broke his word, but he meant it at the time—the digging had gone deep under a little bit of bed-rock.

Doubtless they come for what they can get, but I was surprised that while the above-mentioned Afridi girl was in hospital more than one of her "khel" or clan came down from the Khyber to say why had I not told them I was going into Tirah; had they known they would have come to take care of me, and if I went again they certainly would. One of these men had brought his little girl of five to us on Christmas Day last to have her arm taken off; the wife of another of these Khyber Afridis had been over three months with us, one of the nicest women we

ever had. It was she who begged me to wear all her silver wedding ornaments, as I am doing in the photograph in Afridi dress, and to keep them as long as I liked !

And those few days I was in Tirah, it was a further surprise to find one was positively welcome among the common people and even the mullahs, because in every place there were always some needing treatment of some sort.

The first people to realise the need for this kind of "warfare" on the Frontier were not "padres" or missionaries, but the military. Indeed, officers of the Army were the founders, and the Peshawar Mission to the Afghans was started by a soldier.

When Major W. J. Martin came to Peshawar with his regiment he approached the Government with a view to starting some sort of mission work, and though this request was at first refused, work was begun in 1853, and the Commissioner himself presided at the gathering which organised it. Major Martin superintended the secular work, kept the accounts and built the mission school, which even throughout the dark days of the Mutiny in 1857 was never closed. There were then no Government schools—this was

the first educational institution of any sort on the whole of the North-west Frontier, and the first examination in that school was conducted by Lord Lawrence himself.

In 1854 twenty-one officers and eight civilians signed a letter to the Church Missionary Society asking it to start medical work in Peshawar; this was begun in a "serai" in the city, and our present mission hospital was built in 1907 as a result of that request. The Edwardes ward in the hospital is named after Sir Herbert Edwardes, then the Commissioner, who contributed largely towards it. The medical mission work in Kashmir was also begun at the urgent request of British officers, who were horrified at the disease, want, and degradation they saw in that beautiful country so many years ago. They felt that "missionaries" were most ordinary people, but willing to go all lengths, and therefore essential to the country's good—that was all.

And so missionary folk do not take up their job as a sort of hobby, or because they cannot get a better, but because they are working, distantly perhaps but very practically, towards a better world—soldiers,

statesmen, missionaries, working in different lines but all for true Reconstruction. Missions run on sane lines are therefore not a side-track, but one of the main lines leading to such Reconstruction; possibly it is the *ideas* and opinions the world in general has had regarding them rather than the men and women who run them, that in this twentieth century are antiquated indeed, for it is not creeds but deeds that count for most, and more especially among an elementary people.

That the very elementary law of "the survival of the fittest" and "the weakest to the wall" still is in force among the Pathans, a people living in a bygone age, is revealed by a quaint incident that occurred only the other day.

A man whose brother was in hospital followed me up to the house with a strange request. The patient had been paralysed for three years, and though he could take his food, he was only semi-conscious and could neither speak nor move himself. His brother brought him to us, a long and difficult journey over the hills, in the hope that we could cure him. With the patient

came his wife and little son of three, and with two other men-relations they took up their abode in one of the rooms of our "serai" or family wards. The patient's condition was eased as a result of nursing and treatment, but functionally he was no better, so after a fortnight in the hospital the brother made his request.

"Was complete recovery possible?"—a straight question to which a straight answer had to be given in the negative. "Could we not cure his brother?—he would bring a thousand rupees if we would." We explained that money would not buy a cure, neither did it make any difference in what we did for our patients! Then—for it was evidently the answer he had expected, and producing some rupees by way of making me more inclined to agree to his request—he said quite calmly: "Then in that case, since my brother cannot get well, give me some medicine to cause him to die, as I am ashamed to keep him as he is. I have kept him for three years, half-dead for so long; I am too ashamed to take him back to my country as he is." For half an hour I explained that on no account could we do

it, but all to no purpose. He smiled, and only said I did not understand the situation. In the morning, since we could neither kill nor cure, the paralysed man was taken away, and no doubt they took care that he did not last on much longer.

A saving grace of the Pathan that must not be omitted is his strong sense of humour. At the beginning of this year an Irish officer of the Royal Engineers who was superintending road and tunnel operations in the Khyber Pass, married, and to welcome him and his bride the contractors and men who knew him or worked under him gave a native tea-party in a village in the Peshawar district, to which I accompanied them by way of interpreter, as only Pathans would be likely to be present. During tea, a Khan from the Khyber seated at a little distance, leant forward, and said to me in Pushtu across the table : "Is the Captain Sahib English ?" "Yes," I replied ; then added—though thinking that these frontier men would not know the difference—"Well, he is Irish." But the Khan's whole face brightened, and he answered with alacrity : "Then he is as one of us—the Irish are like us, they too are

always fighting as we are ; they are the Afridis of England, the Irish ! ” “ I knew,” he added with great satisfaction, “ the Sahib was not English.” Whether the Irish or the Afridis are the more complimented, it is hard to say.

Certainly Afridis have no idea of the value of life, and have been known to take sides in a quarrel in which they had no part, for the sheer delight of a scrap ; the same sort of thing is not unknown, so they say, in Erin’s green isle !

But it is in their *religious* beliefs that perhaps the greatest contrast exists between the Afriti of Tirah and the Tibetan of Ladakh.

The former, always and without exception, is a vehement Moslem, with all the characteristic virile antipathy towards any other creed, and the latter a Buddhist simply because he is born a Tibetan, holding a faith mechanical and placid. The son of Islam believes with a force of conviction in the one true God and Mohammed the Prophet of God, with Moses, Jesus, and others as lesser lights ; the Tibetan has, besides the great though somewhat mythical

Buddha, more idols, deities, and incarnations than he can know by name, or even count.

Buddhism is an ancient religion which held a sway and had a civilisation long before the birth of our Lord, and with an ignorance of, rather than any antagonism to, other creeds ; Islam is the only religion of any power that has sprung up since Christianity and in direct opposition to it. In both countries there is one strong similarity. It is the fact that the leaders of their respective religions are the real controllers of things political and of the customs of the people, as well as in the essentially religious sphere.

As in all Moslem lands, the mullahs' attitude leads the people ; should they preach a "jehad" or "holy war," the country rises against the Infidel, and as one man with a single purpose the tribes are united in the cause, and in such a cause alone ; or if the mullahs decide to be friends with the British Government, the times remain peaceful.

The Lamas or Tibetan priests rule their country despotically, somewhat after the fashion of the religious orders in our own land in medieval times, and their monasteries

are invariably built on rocky ledges that overhang and dominate the villages and fields below—the temporal power suggestive of the unique command they hold.

Formality and external observance make both religions material rather than “spiritual” : the Moslem, though he be a murderer or worse, if he fulfils the letter of the religious law as regards fasts and formulas, reciting of creeds, etc., is a good Mussulman ; while the Tibetan by turning his prayer-wheel without thought can gain much merit and get through millions of prayers per day. Indeed, he need hardly go as far as that, for outside many of the villages are prayer-wheels turned by wind or water or by the casual hand of a passer-by, and these accomplish the whole thing more simply still—as by machinery.

Three controlling Powers exist in Tirah : *force*, the power of the sword, which accomplishes most ends ; *treachery*, which enters the life of every man—he is early trained to double-dealing in everything he puts his hand to, and pitted against minds as cunning as himself, a Pathan cannot be single-minded ; and *religion*, the power of the heart, making

him dangerous where it touches life, because religious fanaticism knows no bounds. When inspired by such a fanaticism, a man takes life or gives his own with an utter recklessness ; indeed, force and treachery are both servants to the religious zeal of the Pathan.

The Buddhist is peacable, quiet, gentle and attractive by nature with a reliability and steadiness of character no Pathan can boast. He never brags ; indeed, he is in mental calibre the opposite of the Mohammedan of the Frontier. It is against his religion to take life in any form. But perhaps the even tenor of his life tends to suppress all push and independence of character.

There is no sign of hostility towards the traveller entering Ladakh ; only friendliness is exhibited by the people ; it is absolutely safe and no escort is needed : while to enter Tirah at any time would be risky, and might mean death. Since the customs of a people are governed by their religion, it is easy to trace the difference in their attitude towards strangers.

We took with us on our trek to Lesser Tibet a Pathan servant, a typical Pathan, quick at his work, but inordinately proud and

independent. He was really horrified to find that in that topsy-turvy land the women are free and polyandry exists, and he despised the Ladakh, counting him as little more than an animal in consequence, and speaking of him openly in terms of ill-concealed contempt.

We asked him what of the polygamy in Moslem lands. "Oh, that was quite different!" he thought. We pointed out that in the sight of the Creator both customs were equally and wholly bad, because both were destructive of home life and the morality of a people, but this he could not see. He, however, was left without an answer when we further pointed out that the Buddhist neither lies, steals, nor takes human life—three acts committed daily and thought nothing of by "good Mussulmans" along the Afghan Frontier!

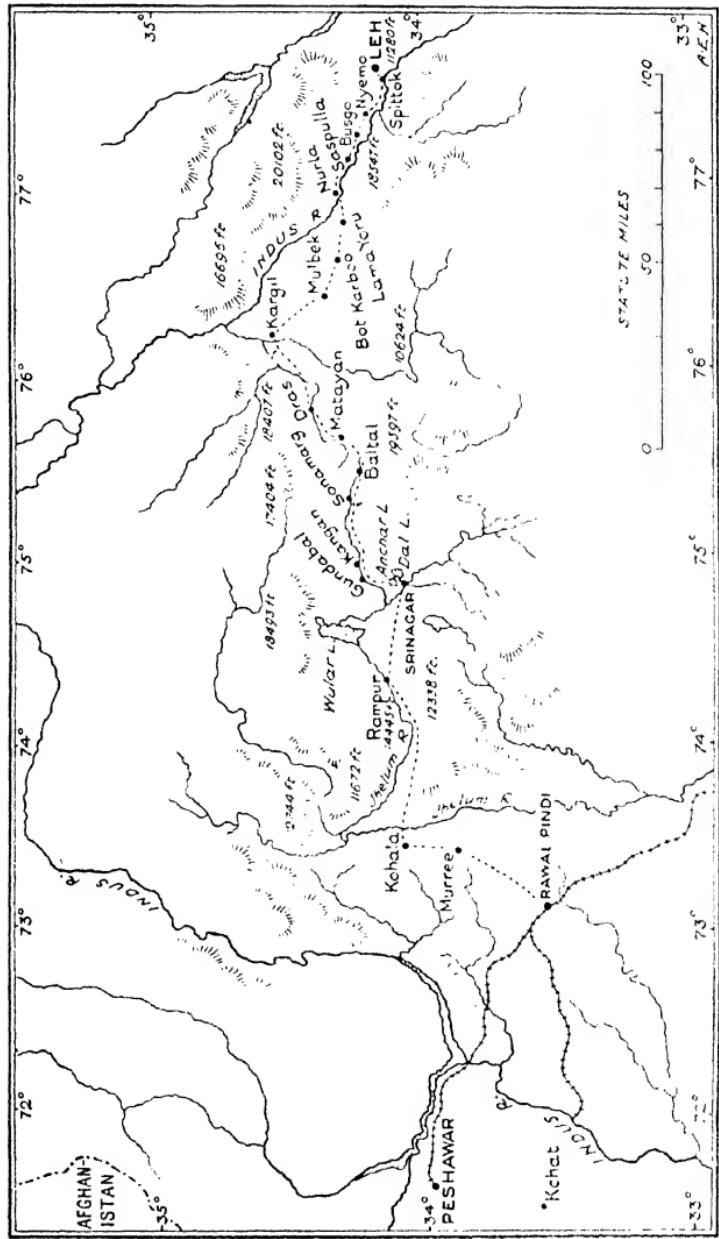
"Truly Allah is great"—was his only reply; possibly more subtle and to the point than it sounds, for was not Allah alone responsible for making such a strange humanity?

Part II

Tales of Lesser Tibet

*Being the Diary of L. A. Starr, the Boy
Hasan, and the Dog Nugly, from Peshawar,
via Srinagar, Kashmir, to Lch, capital of
Ladakh, or Lesser Tibet—and home again
—July and August, 1922.*

MAP OF THE TRUNK INTO LESSER TIBET.



IN any and every hill-station in India during the months of July and August the monsoon is on, the rain is excessive, and a sunny day a memory indeed ! But from Kashmir along the Ladakh road you get out of the range of monsoons, of grassy hillsides and flowers, of clouds and showers, into a land bare and dry as Egypt, wild and strange and wholly fascinating, where every day is sunny—so sunny that one must rise by 4 a.m. to strike camp by sunrise, and get the march over before midday. The rainfall is, I believe, including snow, somewhere about two inches in the year. Over parts of the road the heat is intense—but altogether it is infinitely pleasanter in camp-life to have dry, clean weather.

The 7 a.m. mail train on June 26, 1922, saw us leave Peshawar. The heat had been terrific during the end of June, that is, 126 degrees in the shade sometimes, with the hot wind that scorches by night as by day. I

cannot, however, help referring to the great difference the fans and the lights—electric—made this the first summer we had had them, both in our work in hospital and in my little house: all thanks indeed to the friends at home who gave us these as the memorial to the Doctor.*

Four hours only by train to Rawal Pindi—there the motor-lorry was waiting at the station as arranged—and after a melting midday hour picking up Indian fellow-passengers in the bazaars, also petrol and other details, we pushed off—slowly rising—drinking in new air and new life at every mile till we were among the pine woods, and looking back saw “The Plains”—suggestive term!—a vague, shimmering heat-haze below and far behind. Six p.m. brought us to Murree, where a storm was brewing, and where we turned in for the night—*cold* once again!

Next morning, setting off about 6 a.m., we found that the storm had not only brewed the night before, but “sat down,” as they expressively say, on a bridge near Kohala at the bottom of the big Kohala-Murree hill—

* Dr. Vernon Harold Starr.

in other words, there had been a cloud-burst, and the "Irish" bridge had *gone* completely. Therefore at Kohala we had to stop—meeting folk who were retreating, with the cheering news that their holiday, as far as Kashmir was concerned, must for this year be given up—as the road could not be open again for at least a month.

This was hard to believe. At least, I thought, the *mails* will get through, even if slung over the river in a basket—and where the mail-bags go, why couldn't we—with judicious tipping. Anyhow, the most absurd idea of all was to turn back. The last few miles to Kohala we had to walk, as even this side of the Jhelum there had been several land-slips. We got in, had lunch and a rest—it *was* hot in the valley—and then a motor arrived with one Sahib. We consulted with him, and found he was the Judicial Commissioner of Pindi. He too did not mean to be kept out of Kashmir!

We could do nothing that day, but early next morning, in his car, we all pushed on, over the Jhelum and six miles beyond to the break. From 10 a.m. to late afternoon we were there—most of the time in a damp

drizzle. I loved it after the dry, scorching air of Peshawar. We urged on the coolies, wired to Srinagar, and tried to help by worrying generally! It was interesting watching the temporary bridge grow before one's eyes—in the *dry* water-course, for the cloud-burst had come down and filled the gully, the force of water had swept away the bridge, and followed it, and twenty-four hours after the water-course was practically dry.

At last we got a lift in the evening, in a car, to the next stage—bungalow only. Next morning we waited and waited, and not till afternoon did the “relief car” come through for us. Still, we got to Rampur that night—and next day to Srinagar, five days on the road!

At Rampur we came across the most interesting person on short leave to Kashmir from the deserts of Arabia—an ordinary Captain doing a most extraordinary job, a little King, ruling and making the army and navy of his Arabian Chief, and lent by the British Government to teach him to rule, and modern methods of defence! Like Lawrence of the Hedjaz, it was he who was the obvious

ruler, living where he seldom saw a white man, and chasing slave-dhows along the Arabian coast—and this in 1922 or so !

I reached Srinagar on a Friday, with not much time to lose. I was already late and had still not got luggage or servant, and we had meant to be off for Ladakh by Monday. We flew around, getting remaining stores, flour, sugar, rice, vegetables, and such-like—and in between I loved being back in that home of the Tyndale-Biscoes'.*

We got off a dunga full of servants and kit on Tuesday, July 4, quite early. Our three selves and dog started about midday, in a tiny shikara boat, going the short cut via the Mar Canal and the beautiful Anchar Lake, through the green waterways of the Dal Lake, the narrow Mar with its tall houses and six picturesque bridges over the canal, out into the willow-bordered, weedy entrance of the Anchar. Such a colour-scheme, like a perfect opal!—the brilliant blue and green of the water and sky, the reed beds and the green bronze of the lotus leaves, with here and there the shell-pink of an early lotus lifting

* The Rev. Principal Tyndale-Biscoe, of the well-known College at Srinagar.

its great head a foot or more from the water. Beyond white peaks and blue hills—and like the point of light on the opal, a brilliant blue-bronze kingfisher darting round the boat. A short, sharp storm blew over the lake with lovely effects of light and shade on the hills, but in a few minutes all was clear, and we had tea on the bank where the lake on its farther side merges into the swift Sind River—this took in all eight hours.

By evening we and our asbab had met and camped for the night at Gundabal at the foot of the Sind Valley. We saw the Lambadar, who provides for travellers, and as we had already written ahead *re* ponies, etc., we soon fixed our arrangements with him. Early next morning, loaded ponies, riding-tats, servants, dog, and three selves were off to Kangan—and to our old camp under three huge spreading chenar trees by a running stream. I remember camping in that spot in 1905 !

Next day we climbed from Kangan to Gund. It was tiring going up hill, and rising out of the warm valley, so we did not try more than one stage. We camped just beyond Gund, the regular Ladakhis' camping-ground,

under walnut trees, where there is a very fine view up and down the Sind Valley.

Leaving Gund, I found the Gorge as grand as ever. I think its rugged beauty strikes one more each time, and this is the sixth time at least that I have seen it ! The rain and storms of the previous days had meant fresh snow up the valley, on glacier and rock-peaks above Sonamarg. They were very white and glistening. I think I have never seen so much snow there. We camped for the night on a spur, and enjoyed feeling we were really away on the heights at last, and the log fires we sat round recalled past times up in Sonamarg Camps.

The nine miles from Sonamarg to Baltal are fairly flat but very pretty, amid the last of the great grass slopes and fir forests of Kashmir proper. We had three tents—mine just a small, khaki, officer's eighty-pounder, which I bought, and found exactly what I wanted for pitching every night and striking every morning. With poles and all complete, it weighed one side of a pony's load, and was quite big enough to hold bed, bedding, and yakdan and oneself and dog !—no spare room, then, however !

Here at Baltal we stayed the week-end—arriving Saturday afternoon and leaving before 6.30 a.m. on Monday. On Sunday, after morning “service” among ourselves, we went a long tramp up the Ambernath Nullah. We climbed as far as a big snow bridge, where Nugly romped and raced on the snow like a mad dog. Here began our real trek, for though I had been several times up the Zogi, I had never before been as far as Matayan.

We now divided our journey into stages, varying from ten to twenty miles, each representing a day’s journey according to the nature of the ground to be covered.

So perhaps this is a good place to insert a list of the stages—from Srinagar, capital of Kashmir, to Leh, capital of Ladakh, or Lesser Tibet.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Srinagar to Gundabal | About 12 mil |
| 2. Gundabal to Gund | 10 „ |
| 3. Gund to Sonamarg | 8 „ |
| 4. Sonamarg to Baltal | 9 „ |
| 5. Baltal to Matayan | 15 „ |
| 6. Matayan to Dras | 14 „ |
| 7. Dras to Karboo (Shimshi Karboo) | 21 „ |
| 8. Karboo to Kargil | 15 „ |
| 9. Kargil to Mulbek | 23 „ |
| 10. Mulbek to Bot Karboo | 16½ „ |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-------|
| 11. Bot Karboo to Lama Yoru | About 15 | miles |
| 12. Lama Yoru to Nurla | " 18 | " |
| 13. Nurla to Saspulla | " 14½ | " |
| 14. Saspulla to Nyemo | " 11½ | " |
| 15. Nyemo to Spittok | " 12 | " |
| 16. Spittok to Leh | " 5 | " |

Thinking to be in good time, we started from Baltal to Matayan at 6.15 a.m., but it was not soon enough! for with the long steep climb up the Zogi La Pass, which rises just behind Baltal, we were eight hours exactly over the sixteen miles! Leaving Baltal at the head of and right down in the valley, you climb by a zig-zag path steeply up. We had had to change our ponies at Baltal, as the ones which had come through from Gundabal would go no farther—and among the new lot were several zohs or hybrids—like a yak, but with a less long shaggy coat, and brown like a cow rather than black like the true yak.

The sides of the grass slopes were full of early summer flowers—changing as one went higher. Above Baltal wild wallflower, blue forget-me-not, wild rose—then the deep purple orchid, the anemone, single, or the tall bunch Japanese anemone, nearer the snow-line.

We crossed two very nasty places—slippery melting snow, half frozen over again in the night. Up beyond tree-level, and I had no idea there could be so much snow left on the Zogi in July! It was a cloudless day (we were lucky!). The peaks beyond were glistening and beautiful in fresh snow. We must have crossed more than a mile of snow, deep and hardly frozen. At the watershed, streams run opposite ways from under a huge snowbank some four to five feet thick. A nullah there leads off to Ambernath, coolie-track only and a difficult climb. Beyond the tree-level the sun was hot, the air cold, we soon got painfully sunburnt, but felt most invigorated. Nothing to be seen but rock peaks, snow patches, grass slopes, and the flowers—Alpine flowers which spring with the melting of the snow. A blue sheen of forget-me-nots gave colour—sky-blue—to the valley slopes. Large single white anemones like “Christmas roses,” which I had not seen before, dotted the ground in patches, or in masses like daisies in the fields at home, purple, magenta, and blue primulas, the wild purple iris, red garlic, and a tall cream wild foxglove—and edelweiss and gentian, the



THE ZOGI LÁ PASS, KASHMIR.

small deep blue Swiss variety. But this was only the beginning of the season! It was coming back, in August, that the flowers were at their best, when the whole Zogi was a veritable rock-garden from start to finish, and when just riding through it I counted without difficulty or undue search over *seventy-five* different kinds of wild-flowers! Of the five Passes one crosses going to Leh—though two are over 13,000 feet, and the Zogi is but 11,000 feet, it is odd that yet only the Zogi is snow-covered, and flower-covered too. The “atmosphere” and verdure of Kashmir extend to the farther side of the Zogi, when the whole country undergoes a great change.

Over the Zogi along four or five miles of the Pass, winding slightly down to below 11,000 feet, snow still lying in patches—not a tree or a shrub to be seen—but wonderful pasture-land—snow-streaked rocks to the side of the valley, and below them the stony slopes or moraines, from where we could hear now and again the shrill whistle of the marmots. Lower, the grass slopes and the river, now grown into a strong, rushing stream, and always the great silence of the hills with

only the rushing water and ourselves for sound.

Here and there were dak-runners' huts, where at night the belated "postman" could take shelter. Sometimes we met parties of Ladakhis with their shaggy black yaks, on their way to Kashmir for trade.

Later the valley winds, is flat and flowery, with the peaks and slopes either side narrowing down and shutting us in. Matayan, a fifteen-mile stage, is only a few rough huts on rougher stony ground. Here the rock-cliffs are grand, a red-brown colour, and absolutely bare, reminding us in the red glow of sunset of the tints of the Red Sea coast, as one watches the shore from the steamer deck. Here grass is scarce, there is no wood except what is brought up—and it must be bought at eleven annas a maund. Milk can also be bought—nothing else! The little two-roomed bungalow looks like a sentinel, deserted and alone. We find—according to the log-book of the dak-bungalow—that visitors previous to us claim it to be anything but deserted—"much live-stock." We are glad that we have arranged to take tents, and to pitch every night and

be entirely independent of dak-bungalows *en route*. The sun off the rocks is very hot. Glasses are needed for glare and snow. Already we feel we are not in Kashmir—the very atmosphere is totally different.

The stage from Matayan to Dras was less grand than the previous one, running in a broader valley, but all still above tree-level. The great stretch of valley is very beautiful, but flowers are far less plentiful. At Dras is a patch of wind-driven, weather-beaten trees which boasts the name of a “bagh”! —and indeed we were quite glad to see it; pitching our tents on the lee side, it gave us some shelter from the strong wind.

I have heard of tents being blown inside out at Dras. A strong wind gets up every evening. Indeed from the Zogi practically the whole way to Leh we found we were facing the wind, and had it behind us coming back from Leh. Near Dras is some cultivation, and small villages among the fields. These are of a different style to Kashmiri ones; the houses are built on high walls, with small slit windows. The people are more Tibetan in type. We saw already a few pigtailed men, though most have short

hair ; they are Mohammedans and not Buddhists. Between the Zogi and Kargil is buffer territory dividing both people and country—Kashmir from Lesser Tibet. There is no shade whatever in this march except one huge rock, in the shadow of which we lunched.

Then the whole country suddenly changed. Now we knew why the visitors who wrote in the log-book of the Matayan dak-bungalow have for the last five years kept up a running correspondence as to whether the road to Leh leads to heaven or hell !

This stage is a long twenty-one miles, there is no shade, it is very hot in July, and the march should be begun by 4.30 a.m. or the twenty-one miles divided. There is nothing green except one wee bagh, a grateful halting-place, with water near and a spot of shade. All is *rock*—rock hills, a stony, sandy path, sloping up and down but all over and among rock—sometimes fine granite and a rough red stone. But the glare and heat ! For this stage one needs a thoroughly good pony—to ride all the way—and to start by 4.30 a.m. or sooner. We lunched early under a big rock by a

little stream, the only possible spot except another huge rock and a waterfall which came too early in the march. Going on and on, we found we again needed to stop and rest and have tea, in the one green spot, a "bagh" after eight miles or so more. The last six or seven miles we did in the evening, sending the camp on to pitch ready. The camping-ground was about six yards square, a much-watered piece of grass at the foot of the stony bare hill, and enclosing six apricot trees. Outside the tiny dak-bungalow, and below the river. The valley is still magnificent, with its crags and steep slopes, and the river rushing below.

Our next day's journey from Karboo to Kargil was only fifteen miles, but such a fifteen! Nothing green at all—just the rocky cliffs of the mountains shutting us in, and the rushing river. Here and there, almost incongruous among the rocks, were wild-rose bushes, in full flower—patches of rose pink or magenta on the brown-grey. They are the single Queen Alexandra kind, and I have never seen such a blaze of colour on single bushes. Near Dras we had seen the small-leaved thorny rose, with a bright

buttercup-yellow double flower, which the children wore in their caps.

Here again we lunched at the first shade we met—a bagh, large and green and very wet, cool and refreshing—quite a spot of Heaven in the midst of “Little H,” as some bold spirits term the road! Some way after lunch we passed the fine suspension bridge leading off to Skardo, and crossing the Indus. Skardo is the capital of Baltistan—the Baltis are Mohammedan, wear consequently no pigtails, but otherwise much resemble the Ladakhis. The people of the land between Kashmir and Kargil are of a distinct type, though with something Tibetan about them, and wearing rather similar long tunie dresses, but little tight caps over shaven heads.

At Kargil there are old gold-mines; we unfortunately did not see them. There is said to be gold in abundance, and the natives wash the Indus sand for it, but Government does not work the mines, owing to the enormous expense involved in carting workmen and machinery and stores so far. Only half a mile before Kargil we came down on to the bed of the river, where the valley widens and becomes earthy and fertile. We

stopped by the river, an irresistible, shady, cool spot; it was quite a relief to wash and get wet! Fifteen miles of the stony path cut out of the mountain side, shadeless, sandy, and full of loose stones, had seemed long enough. We sent the kit on to wait in Kargil, and the men to pitch camp, and followed later.

Kargil is a "large" town—with a bazaar! It is the largest place in the district, with granaries, shops, and even a meat-shop! It is an oasis in the hills, with fields of corn then in ear, clumps of shady trees, and quite a large caravanserai. We camped under trees—in a delightful spot beyond the town and the dak-bungalow, which is too near the town and serai to be free from insects.

We must have descended some hundreds of feet, for it was really warm, even in the evening, at Kargil. Here, too, we had to change all our ponies again. They had come through from Dras. We have now eight for baggage and one riding-pony, but we are having two of the latter, and one for the servants between them, for the rest of the way—for fifteen miles of this going is not an easy stage. Between Kargil and

Mulbek, however, lie twenty-three miles ! Had we known, we should have divided the stage. Coming back we did so, staying at Chuli-scamps—"the place of wild apricots" or chulis—where there is a very nice garden.

This time our men were quite Ladakhis—only two knew any Urdu at all. At Kargil we took on a boy of the place as tiffin coolie, who knew the way, *and* Urdu, was most willing and cheery, and proved thoroughly useful. On the hottest, steepest march, with his hot narudah "dressing-gown"—coat tucked up round his waist—he still kept pace with us on our riding-ponies, and he carrying the lunch-basket complete ! For these services he was paid at the rate of 12s. per month. At Kargil there is a Tehsildar, posted there by the Kashmir Government, and the present one is a friend of Principal Tyndale-Biscoe and an old Lahore Forman Christian College boy.

Beyond Kargil the road and the scenery greatly improve. Crossing another big suspension bridge, and part of the Tehsildar's house where passes have to be reported, you rise up on to a broad table-land. Trees, green oasis, and ripening wheat are seen,

with a mud village built behind, on or into the hill, wherever there is a flat spot near the river, or in its bed. Behind are the bare mountains, with snow on the tops of some of them. This broad expanse is really a pass—crossing it you wind down a steep little path, to a village, some fields, and up again. This is a very steep climb, bare, treeless, and grassless away over into another valley—all ups and downs—another small “pass” to another valley, when winding down you come to Lotsun. Here, then, is no good camping-place, but two miles on at Darket are several. We camped there by the river, just off the road.

This country reminds me of Egypt—green patches below, stopping abruptly with the line of watered land, and above, sharply distinct, the rough sandhills, here brown-red and quite bare. We camped under stunted willow trees.

The stiff stage from Darket to Mulbek we did next morning—and were glad we had not attempted to push through the night before. It is a longish pass, some five miles, rising steadily between absolutely bare hills. Nothing green is to be seen till,

winding down and round a corner, you suddenly see below you the Mulbek Valley—and then you have your first sight of things Tibetan. On a high hill across the valley, built on and into the perpendicular rock, is the Shergol Monastery, and below, some way off, stands a chortan. The monastery arrests one's attention at once; it is red-roofed and whitewashed over, its sides appear to overhang the rock—I suppose it is accessible from the farther side. Here the hills are sandhills, and the reddish granite and sandstone ends with a patch of bluish green-grey, suggestive of copper ore in the rock. It is probably full of untouched minerals and precious stones; for the latter Tibet is famous. Here in the soft sandhills round Mulbek the rain or snow or wind has carved quaint points and knobs, and deep gullies in them. Sometimes a line of sharp rock with serrated edge stands out on the sky-line, at the summit. Perhaps those very shapes have in the past suggested buildings to the people, for often high and inaccessible points and crags are surmounted by bits of old ruins, and it is hard to discern ruin from rock. The gompas, or monasteries,

were always built on weird summits, the tops of precipices and so forth, partly for the defence that in old days was needed, and partly for meditation and the view. Below the monastery and the brown sand-cliffs is a stretch of green crops, where the river has washed down a deposit of dark earth, especially fertile. The chortan is typically Buddhist. It may be sugar-loaf in shape or more elaborate, it often has a red point, a rough red-brick foundation, and the main part is whitewashed. Some are old and tumbledown, some white and new, showing for miles. These chortans are to be seen near, but outside, every village. Sometimes a dozen or two, sometimes hundreds, it appears, outside towns. Later, on entering Lama Yoru, while riding on my pony, I counted eighty or more, and then certainly many were too indistinct to count. But more about gompas and chortans later.

Winding through the valley, a broad opening at the farther end brought us to the place itself. We were stopped here, and discovered that from here on one has to change ponies and men at every stage. This is arranged by Government, i.e. the

Resident, and it seems the Ladakhis pay their taxes by providing men and ponies stage by stage for small rates. But the people are most polite, fully contented with the money they get, and an anna per head bakhsheesh per stage!—and always seem cheery and smiling. Indeed they consider us a great joke—and there never seems any difficulty *re* transport. A tekidas, or at least a lambadar (head-man), is appointed at every stage stopping-place, who comes along and gets us ponies. He also helps to get milk and wood—as well as chickens and eggs wherever possible, though one cannot be sure of getting these at any but regular “towns.”

At one or two places, as Kargil and Lama Yoru, there are granaries, where āta can be got at so much per head by allowance. There are little bungalows at each regular stage, with a chowkidar, but for comfort's sake one's own tents on the camping-ground near the bungalow are far nicer, and an enormous economy in Keating's, of which I had been warned to take a vast supply!

We lunched at Mulbek while horses were changed, as we intended to do all the next

stage if possible, as well as the seven miles we had come. Behind where we sat towered a great cliff, at this side perpendicular and on the summit the monastery, the first we had seen at close quarters. Indeed the road passes right under it. It gives the impression of a coast-guard station on a sea-cliff at home; it is whitewashed, and the windows picked out in red lines—two storeys high, but no windows open and no sign of life. Below this, the sheer rock, are the mud houses, at different angles and heights, and wherever possible on ledges or slopes. Below lies the serai and dak-bungalow and polo-ground, and below these again, stretching away, the open valley-plain, like a still sea.

Just outside Mulbek is a huge rock, one single rock some 40–50 feet high, and standing alone. On it is carved a great idol, standing, probably not a Buddha, but a picture of "The Coming One," his beads in his hand. Below is a little temple, a small preserved plot of land, and rose bushes. These were in full bloom, the pink flower in mass most beautiful against the grey rock.

Here at Mulbek we met our first real Tibetans, and gazed and gazed at the women.

They wore long black robes to the ankles. Sheep-skins or goat-skins inside-out hang across their backs from their shoulders. Some of them carried large kilta-shaped baskets on their backs for field-work, and—on their heads . . . Words fail me to describe the head-dress: They wear a long red cloth-covered affair, hanging down the back over the spine—this is sewn all over with turquoise matrix, blue, red cornelian, and some silver charms, sometimes cowrie shells and blue beads. Projecting at almost right angles behind the ears are two large black fur-covered oval flaps, which make them look at a little distance uncommonly like black bears. In fact, we did mistake one sitting in a field among the crops for such! Some of these women wore black caps, and metal wristlets (to keep their long loose sleeves off their hands), and socks. Socks I must needs call them; they were exactly like a baby's bootees, in a large size, made of white namdar and underneath half-cured leather.

They are really a treat to look at, the quaintest sight, with their funny, always (it seems) smiling faces, and Chinese expressions.

A little crowd of them gathered round, observed us with as much interest as we did them, and carried off with delight, by way of spoil, an empty tongue-tin minus lid. The men are not quite so quaint—furry caps, filthy, long thin pigtails, the front of the head shaven, and loose side-tufts of untidy hair. The pigtail makes a long shiny black grease-mark all down the back of the once-white, loose dressing-gown garment—the one thing they wear, unless there be a rosary extra. They are most attractively quaint and extraordinarily dirty. The same big woolly bootees, and the same amused and amusing smile. They gathered round us, chatting and laughing among themselves, and they struck us as being so unspoilt and friendly.

Now we felt we were not in India, no, not even in Waziristan or the Khyber, of which for days past the bare, rough, rocky hills had forcibly reminded us. No, we were in **Lesser Tibet**—the stress being placed on the first, not last, syllable—and the language quite proved it !

Going on, we rose first among crops, green and well-watered there in the valley, then

up into bare hills again. Winding up and up, steeply, till we surmounted a pass—here sand everywhere, blown in dunes like the desert; it was steep, long, and glaring. The sand too hot for Nugly, the dog, to walk on in comfort. Nothing but these round, rotting sandhills lay around us. The hours from twelve to three were not the time to have chosen! I thought of the sand round the Sphinx. There was no water; we went up and up, and at the summit there was a mighty view of ranges of peaks—all bare, all different shades of rock, fading into a lovely deep blue in the distance. Then down, down, steeply, with no possible stopping-place. In one spot a wee trickle ran across the road—and that was salt. The whole sixteen miles of this stage was like Sahara.

Near the end of the last mile from Mulbek to Bot Karboo, having dropped down to the valley-level, again from about 13,000 feet, you come into a wide valley at right angles, bare for the most part, but wherever the river left the cliffs for flatter land where a surface of earth had been deposited, there would be a patch of green on the river-level, a little

village struggled up the mountain-sides in the rock, and on a spur or peak immediately above would be its monastery.

Nearing Bot Karboo village, we saw lots of "life." Most of the villages had seemed half deserted, owing perhaps to the harvesting having begun. Here a number of women were climbing the hill to the town—their children with them. What they looked like is hard to describe—a flock of goats almost, from behind, with their long black robes, black fur ear-pieces, and white skins on their backs. They waited for us to pass at the entrance of the village, some running away from us. Everyone we pass says the salutation "Ju-ju-le" (or greets us with a salaam) and bows. We passed a house with a lama on the roof (not llama, the animal!). He was dressed in a dull brick-red, and was like a picture of the priests of the Inquisition as depicted in history. He had a hard and a dirty face.

We passed men in the serai from Gilgit, or Hunza, and Naga, their features and tightly rolled turban caps more like the Pathan than the Tibetan. They were probably there trading.

We camped beyond the town, where a nice "bagh" is provided, and an excellent spot. The fresh grass is full of edelweiss, and young trees are planted which will later be shady. We had come twenty-four miles, nearly one and a half stages—not a good division!

Breaking into the fresh stage from Bot Karboo to Lama Yoru, we tackled first a long stretch, following the river, but above it. Once again it was almost bare, and there the sandstone cliffs took quaint formations. Then we climbed up and up, over another pass, less hot than the preceding day, for it was early in the morning. From the summit we had again a great view, both ways, of peaks beyond peaks, some snow-capped. We then plunged down and down a rocky, stony path, for nearly sixteen miles, till a sudden sharp turn in the gorge between the hills, and a short, steep climb, brought us to a great big chortan, the size of a small room, standing there in the centre of the path, marking a wonderful view. In front lay Lama Yoru, between the hills, a fertile valley round, the monastery-crowned hill looking like a fairy city, quite ethereal (at a distance).

It was a complete picture, shut into itself

and framed in blue hills. Rows of chortans, five to six, or twelve or even more in a string, stretched along the road—I counted eighty-five riding into Lama Yoru. Before each was a long, low, roughly built stone wall, built of ordinary stones from the river-bed, but on all the top ones which lay loosely covering the flat, broad top of the wall was carved the Buddhist “motto”: *Ö Máni padmi hun*. There must be hundreds on every wall. These prayer-walls are another striking Buddhist feature which I will describe more fully later.

We camped in the only possible place—a rather stuffy camping-ground under closely grown willows, below the rest-house and the town. It all looked so picturesque from afar, and decidedly dirty near. We rested that day in camp for the afternoon, as it was Sunday.

The finest single march of the whole trek—that from Lama Yoru to Nurla—lay before us. At the very outset the path enters a gorge, one of the finest pieces of rock-work I have ever seen, and which has been justly compared with the canyons of Colorado. The rocks are all weird shades and colours,

grey and black, red, greenish, and white—sandstone “ battlements ”—just like those of some medieval castle, but made by wind and water, and probably changing their shape yearly. They stand up on the high sky-line, looking like stalagmites—great natural pillars and rounded towers. The gorge must be some eight miles long, in some places narrow, with cliffs, sheer up for two hundred feet or more with overhanging rocks ; sometimes long shale slopes like the old path of a glacier, iron-ochre colour, pink-red, grey-brown, and every soft hue. There is not a vestige of green or of life at all, even by the river, which dashes, dirty-coloured and foaming, through the gorge.

Great rocks standing in the way throw up the spray, and the river itself takes a sharp turn every few yards, cutting its way through. The path we followed, the only one at all, is cut out, now high above the river, then dropping steeply—too steeply to ride at all, and twisting and turning, in the spray of the noisy torrent. I was reminded, too, of the rock scenery, colours and all, I had seen in the views of *Colonel Lawrence among the Arabs*. Any time we might have been,

I imagine, in “Mespot” or Arabia’s hilly country. The gorge was magnificent, deep and narrow till it opens suddenly into a wider rock-valley as the torrent we had been following enters the wide River Indus.

A little farther a very fine suspension bridge crosses the Indus ; here the old and the new meet, for the bridge is new, British-made, and beside it stands the quaint old mud Bragnag Castle, where a quaint old Tibetan chowkidar asks for pice and where the prayer-walls on the farther side are covered more thickly than ever with “máni stones.”

The view here reminds one of the Gorge at Attock, where one crosses the Indus and enters the Peshawar Valley, but of course the river is less wide here, narrower but equally rocky and bare. Here and there a flower blooms, a white, sweet-scented thing like a large honeysuckle, only crawling like a periwinkle. Small patches of this stuff, but no grass. About two miles on one comes round a corner into a green valley, Kalatze, wide, open, and green with fields of corn, large clumps of walnut trees and little streams. All a very marked contrast to the road.

We sat in a cool spot by a stream, under shady walnut trees, and lunched, and were most grateful for the shade. There is a mission bungalow in an apricot garden at Kalatzc, as it is an "out-station" of Leh, but the Christian in charge was not at home and the gate was locked. Coming back we stayed there, and sat under the trees with ripe apricots dropping off them round us—literally! There is a water-tank for storing water under another clump of walnuts, and here Tibetan men and beasts had collected—a picturesque group. Beyond came another perfectly bare sandy stretch of eight miles to Nurla—sand and rock, nothing green, and the muddy brown Indus flowing below. Indeed, at one place where we waited for the ponies to come up to us the sandy path was so burning that one could not keep one's bare hand on it—and seeing the dog was restless and unhappy, I put my jersey on the ground, when he immediately jumped on to it and sat there, when I realised that the heat of the flint and sand must positively have been scorching his feet.

At Nurla we camped on grass—a lovely stretch, with fields round and a broad valley.

The stretch from Nurla to Saspulla which we took next—on July 8—is a hot and a dull fourteen and a half miles, for there was no colour and no fantastic formations in the rock and sandhills. Even the Indus, in the bank of which the path was cut, was a leaden dirty grey, and not the foaming varying shades of colour we had first seen it. It was a full, broad current, however, and a strong wind blew up the valley. We lunched under three minute trees, and were reminded of the traveller's story of the man crossing the Sahara, who was so delighted at the distant sight of what he took to be telegraph wires—for at least he thought he might rest in the shade of the wires! Still, these wee trees were all there were and better than nothing. We didn't stay long, however, and went on at 1.30 p.m. I could *feel* the heat of the stones through my thick brogue shoes, and as for Nugly the dog, he simply couldn't walk, and I carried him on my saddle, with a double-covered umbrella over us both! He would whine, put his front feet against the pony's leg, asking to come up. Then with a touch on his collar, he would jump. If I were going again, I

would know better how to make the Leh trip more of a pleasure trip, by dividing the stages better and marching earlier.

The stages, of course, *have* to be where a village is, where water is, and a patch of green if possible. In-between camping even for a night would be impossible. After going some miles through utterly bare, God-for-saken-looking country, you may suddenly come on a small oasis with a patch of green and houses—then more bare miles, to another, at varying distances. Often in between one might see the river below, but not be able to reach it, because of the steep cliffs and rocks—and there would be no stopping-place whatever because not an inch of shade. The glare on the sand was intense; blue glasses are a necessity, and a spine-pad of sorts. The skin on our faces, hands, and knees burnt and burnt again, leaving them sore in the dry air which beats off the rocks.

The town of Saspulla was, we found, similar to Nurla. Outside the town were chortans, and a prayer-wall covered with “*Ománi*” stones. One large chortan contained a prayer-wheel, the first we had seen,

which I turned, putting my hand through a hole in the chortan for the purpose.

At one place a lama came and begged. He was dressed all in brick-red, a long gown tied with a girdle, and a red chaddar thrown across his shoulders, a red hat with the side-corners turned up, and a chain of prayer-beads. His face struck one as of a very low type, in fact quite wanting in expression --was it due to so much time being given to meditation and absorption into nothingness! --and was it typical, we wondered, of the lama type?

We camped in the bagh of the dak-bungalow, the only place, as we had done in the last several stages.

We were now breaking into the fifteenth stage--from Saspulla to Nyemo--and the easiest stage since Sonamarg to Baltal. Through Saspulla, past numerous chortans, in long strips bordering the road, past or under a quaint, whitewashed gateway, rather Chinese in shape, the path wound steeply up the pass--a very rough path, heavy with deep sand. The wild country all round was perfectly bare--above, a long desert table-land sloping slowly downwards again, moun-

tains all round and on the horizon, shutting us in, with snow on some of the summits.

Down and down we plunged, swerved round a hill, and below we saw a valley with the quaintest town, Busgo by name, built literally into the opposite hillside—an eerie place with an eerie, gnomish name.

Dropping down to Busgo, we found a very pretty stream in a tiny grassy wood, and had lunch beside it. The three miles left to Nurla were across a bare, level, sandy plain. Almost the entire distance were chortans—in the intervals between them were the long low prayer-walls, of ten to fourteen feet wide, and five high, covered with the flat, rounded stones. On every *surface* stone was carved the prayer, or at least the first letter of it. Here some of these stretches of wall were a hundred feet or even more in length, but the longest prayer-wall in the country is that outside Leh, which is a mile and a quarter long !

We camped just outside the bungalow, in a wood in which it is built, the best and largest "garden" on the road, and quite a nice new bungalow. We were glad we were in our own tents each night, however, as

other travellers came along later, and doubling up would have been awkward—they are only two-roomed bungalows.

Next day—July 16—we took the last stage of our outward journey—Nyemo (or Nimo) to Leh. We left early, and went off over a long, open, sandy stretch, till we reached a bagh and a stream, perhaps eight miles on. Here we had breakfast-lunch (brunch for short)—and while at it, to our surprise, we saw someone riding up to us, who proved to be Mr. Aslow of the mission at Leh, who had ridden out to meet us. We had dropped down to this valley and stream, so small that there was no village. The eight miles had brought us over a really fine pass. One pictured it snow-covered in winter. As it was, the view both ways from the top is magnificent—peaks and peaks blending to the skyline on one side—and below the whole Indus Valley with the Leh Valley in the distance, going off it at right angles five miles up into the hills. In the main valley here the river is broad and has gathered enough earth on its flat open banks to allow for shrubs and grass, so that from above there is a green strip half a mile wide

on either side of the silver streak of the river. Winding down the pass, there is no marked path except that formed by the foot-marks of the animals in the thick sand. We noticed a solitary hill a mile or two off to the left with the Pyang Monastery on its summit—built on the cliff, several storeys high, and quite alone, it was an impressive pile, like some old-world giant's castle. A tiny stone hut, about five feet in circumference and three to four feet high, was there on the top, to shelter the “postman” runner carrying the mails. After a chat with Mr. Aslow, who turned to lead us into Leh, we rode on, our little tired ponies unable to keep up with the pace his fat, sturdy Yarkandi would have liked to go. As we rode up the Indus Plain towards the green stretch by the river, Dr. Heber rode down to meet us. He thought we would have been in Leh hours before!—but then our ponies and theirs were very different goers.

Dr. Heber was riding Droma, his famous white horse, which everybody in this corner of the world knows. We did not keep along the river to Spittok, but (leaving it, the Fort, and the Gompa on our right) pressed straight

up towards Leh, up the five miles of sloping desert away from the river.

Leh is another oasis, only much larger than any we had passed *en route*. The Indus Plain is ten miles broad, enclosed by great ranges, whose peaks are all 20,000 feet. The green part which is flooded, or at least watered, by the Indus is only a mile across. Leh is in a sense on the Indus, though actually it is five miles off at the foot of the hills, where a little river rises, a river which, after "watering" Leh, gets used up and loses itself in the sand before even it reaches the great river !

The five miles is a rising sandy plain, wide and open, covered in the deep sand and loose stones, like an old river-bed all over. The longest "Ó Máni" wall runs from Leh down into the desert plain, and has a huge chortan at either end—one and a quarter miles between. Riding up towards the town, but still out on the open desert, is the wee Christian cemetery, where Irene Petrie is buried, also several Moravian missionaries and their wives and some Tibetan converts. One passes a Mohammedan cemetery too, for even here come Baltis, Yarkandis,

Pathans—merchants mostly. But there are no Buddhist cemeteries—no graves dotting the open countryside in great patches, as on the Frontier—for the Buddhists do not bury.

Riding down into Leh one gazes on sandy plain, the town on the hillside, the gardens below on the left near the water; while above on the cliffs rises the old castle, and still higher, the Leh Monastery. We rode along, past houses built almost under the steep castle rock, past more “Ó Máni” walls, up to a big wall, with a double door in its centre. Over the high doorstep your pony steps, through the door, and you enter the centre of Leh, the main bazaar. You might imagine the door was the entrance to a house or courtyard, and it is quite a surprise to find oneself in a wide bazaar road—houses and shops on either side, Tibetan folks strolling everywhere, and beyond and behind the towering cliffs and the castle. In this main street, which *is* Leh, polo is played, but this did not happen while we were there.

Wherever one looks, the castle and the monasteries (the old and the new) seem to

"One gazes on sandy plain, the town on the hillside, the gardens below to the left; on the cliff rises the



crown the cliffs. But it is the people even more than the place that are really fascinating. Red lamas and pigtailed men, women in black wearing turquoise-covered peraks on their heads and sheepskins on their backs and big black ear-flaps behind their heads, are to be seen everywhere—the latter look most weird, most bear-like. Some of the more advanced and many of the Christian women wear turn-up cornered caps like the men, often in red and blue, and made of cloth, without ear-flaps or turquoise ornaments. But always the long tunic dress and broad girdles, men and women much alike—and always a skin or a shawl, gracefully arranged, falling over the back. Turning into a side-street around a corner, just out of the town, we passed the door of the Mission Hospital, and just beyond on the road leading to the Residency, at the corner, is the Hebers' home. It is a charming, homey little house, standing in a little vegetable garden, growing chiefly potatoes—a delicacy up there—and looking like some English farm-house, its low roof and honey-suckled porch and tiny entrance-hall all adding to this impression.

Here Mrs. Heber met us, and their two dear babes, six years old and eight months. But we had no time to spare when we first arrived—for it was just 2 p.m., and we heard that that very afternoon was to be held *the reception given by the Wazir in honour of the Resident*, who had arrived two days before. This began at 3 p.m., and we were invited.

In Leh—that small hub of the Ladakh universe—the missionaries are the centre. Everyone going to Leh calls on them. They are the *only* resident Europeans. The Resident of Leh is the Assistant Resident of Kashmir, and spends anything from three weeks to possibly three months in Ladakh during the summer season. So the missionaries were honoured guests, and anyone who might be staying with them, the Resident and his friends—and any other English who might at the moment be in Leh. Invitations, typed, were sent us each, by name, with a programme of the events.

It was timed to begin at three, and to last till eleven, with intervals for tea and dinner, and all the Europeans in Leh were asked. The entertainment was to be after the pattern of the yearly festival at Hemis,

and to include a devil-dance, so though we had missed the Hemis affair, which this year was held in June, we were more than fortunate to arrive just in time for this.

The Programme was as follows :

1. Prayer and Drama. 3–3.30 p.m.
2. Children's Play, by the State School boys.
3.30–4.
3. Tea. 4–4.30.
4. Lama Dance. 4.30–6.
5. Rest. 6–8 (presumably for dressing).
6. Dinner (for European guests).
7. The Tall Man.
8. The Chicken.
9. The Lion.
10. The Snake.
11. The Old Man with his Son.
12. Pony Riding.
13. The Kashmiri Pundit.
14. The Sword-dance.
15. The Boat and Amban.
16. The Women's Dance.

This was the programme, as given us, but there were various alterations, which I shall describe.

It was performed in the garden of the Wazir's house. The Wazir himself is a Kashmiri, or even Punjabi, appointed by the Kashmir Government, for a period of some three or five years, after which he is changed. He spends the winter at Skardo and the summer at Leh. Later we called on the Wazir's wife, a Punjabi, who was pleased to be able to talk Urdu with someone freely.

After arriving and changing, we went to the show—in time to see Part 2, the “State School” boys, drilling in Principal Tyndale-Biscoe’s ways and with his methods, even to the imitation of the Living Welcome, only the boys formed the shape of the letters standing or sitting on the grass. “Imitation is the best flattery”—if so, whatever they may say, it shows what Kashmiris think of Mr. Biscoe and his ways. On the way to Leh we had met the new head master for the State School in Leh, who was an old “Biscoe Boy,” though not a Christian.

Tea, which was the next item, was interesting, for there were separate Shamiana tents arranged: (1) for the King and the Skushok of Hemis, who sat apart and alone; (2) for the Resident and European

guests ; (3) for Hindus, mostly Kashmiri officials ; (4) for Mohammedan officials and any others. Of course Shamiana (1) was the most curious and interesting. The Hemis Skushok is the highest Incarnation next to the Dalai Lama himself, and the chief in all Ladakh—a solemn round face in large spectacles. The young king, solemn also, sat on the left of the Skushok and on the same level. He is a priest-king—and an ex-king, for the British Raj took away the kingdom, putting it under Kashmir. The King now lives in the royal village of Stok, and only draws the revenue of that place and the land round, so is now quite poor, and has never been able to afford a visit to Srinagar !

Strange figures, this young priest-king, an “Incarnation” of the first King of Tibet, and the Skushok or Pope—the head of the lamas or monks—and Incarnation of the first Skushok. The monastery system is very like Roman Catholicism in the Middle Ages—a Roman Catholic visitor himself thought so. The lamas absolutely rule, the people, the land, everything. Lamaism is degenerated Buddhism—*full* of superstition and idolatry. An instance which shows this is the power

of the *astrologers*. Two astrologers led in the Lama or Priests' Dance, and astrologers come into everything, and are consulted on every occasion. Not long before our visit the old ex-Queen was to have an operation for cataract, for which she was to come into the Mission Hospital on a certain day, and be operated on by Dr. Heber. A Tuesday had been fixed, but on the Monday the King himself came over, and with great agitation besought Dr. Heber to postpone it to the Wednesday, otherwise, according to the astrologers, the stars, and the magic, there was no chance for her sight. It was, of course, postponed a day to please them, and her sight resulted from the operation ! Cause and effect !

To return to the programme. Now came the most weird part of the whole quaint programme. The audience—all Leh in its gala dress—became animated. Rows of brown faces in turquoise head-dress and black ear-flaps, sitting and standing, turn-up caps on the men, and “red and yellow” lamas among the people, pressed closely round on three sides of the square. We, seated—Europeans, Skushok King, etc.—were on the



THE DEVIL'S DANCE OF THE PRIESTS.

fourth side, under an awning. This was the famous Devil-dance of the Priests.

There were eleven figures, two astrologers in tall hats leading, and followed by nine masked lamas : four of these wore grinning, harmless-looking cows' heads as masks—two were horned—another wore a grinning human face, with a tall hat on, and waved a curved sword. The music was slow and rhythmical. The band was composed of lamas only—some of whom were little boys, but still they might be lamas of high rank, known as “Grand-father Lamas.” They blew trumpets : small ones for the boys, long ones as much as *nine feet* in length were blown by the men ; it took two to carry one trumpet. “Blowing the big bassoon” wasn’t in it, but only one double note seemed to be the result—a long, very low deep drone. There were drums and cymbals—the music was on *two notes*—very monotonous—*one-two, one-two*, with a *clash* of cymbals and bang of drums on the first. There was no tune—the dancers leapt forward on the first sound, and halted on the second. The music seemed to get into one’s bones, the long drone and the bang on the one weird hollow note. It seemed to fit the occasion.

All wore most lovely Chinese silks, of every artistic colour, blended and embroidered. Many were very old, and red, yellow, green, and blue colours blended on each robe. Even the masks were green, red, and blue! Many of the lamas had come in from the Pyang Gompa we had passed near to the day we came in to Leh. They had been down to dance before the Prince of Wales at Jammu, so had their best robes with them. The masks are far too large proportionately for their faces, and one can see that the men's eyes were behind the grinning open mouths, and through the mouths of the masks they could see their way. They took a leap forward, then whirled round, waving their arms and skirts, and slowly in that way went round the square. From the astrologers' hats drooped silk veils that fell to their ankles behind. Many undressed-up Lamas were watching—a few had nice faces, some very evil, the majority very unintelligent. They wore the ordinary lama dress, already described, but some the yellow cap, some the red, according to which "school" they belonged to.

The Lopspon or Gespon "Teacher of the

Dances" was another quaint figure. He is a head lama, and directs the "music." He wears a bright yellow shawl, and a tall cap like a mitre, of yellow-ochre stuff.

Many of the masks have the *third eye* in the middle of the forehead, and one had a trunk which turned upwards—stiff. In the second lama dance only two took part; in the third there were four figures; and in the fourth dance there were several, wearing fresh masks, again of animals' heads. The music for this was louder and cruder—possibly it was a skit and the lamas buffoons, for the crowd were no longer solemn and many laughed outright. The Tibetan does possess humour! The *meaning* of the masked figures and the devil-dancee is that the soul immediately after death has to meet such animals, and so that they shall be less afraid of them, then it is well for people to get acquainted with them now. So once or twice a year they come out and perform before the assembled crowds. No one seemed afraid of them. We concluded they knew it was a children's game of "dressing up"—though with an air of solemnity about it. The red lamas are the ones who dance; the

yellow make up the band. There are two *sects* in Ladakh, known as red and yellow ; the yellow are the more advanced.

The dinner was composed of sixteen courses —meat pilaos, and all sorts of things. There were eleven of us—the Resident, Mr. Wingate (son of the Sirdar of Egypt, Sir R. Wingate), a gold-seeker hunting for gold, servant of some Gold Company, three English missionaries, a psycho-therapist lady-traveller, a captain up on leave for shooting, and three resident Swedish missionaries, Moravians—a mixed assembly.

After dinner came a number of humoresques : by the “tall man” obviously on stilts ; the “chickens”—two huge birds, very well got up—men dressed in sheepskins, with long necks (their arms) and small heads and beaks like vultures. The people thought them a great joke, and laughed as little children would be amused with a new toy. These large chickens hopped about and picked insects off their “feathers” in the most realistic way.

The lion was composed of two men under a skin—no attempt to hide their human legs ; but the comic part was it suddenly rolled and

a baby lion was born—a small child in a skin—roars from the Tibetan audience !

The snake was a long coloured muslin sash, with lighted Chinese lanterns in it, held up by men on sticks, who ran here and there, and in the gathering darkness it seemed almost like an illuminated fire-snake.

The “old man” had a doll, whom he was supposed to beat and be unable to keep in order—the audience thought it fat and funny.

The Kashmiri pandit was a good-humoured sketch on that typical personage. The pony-riding was not done.

The sword-dance was extremely good—done first by a Balti, then by a Pathan (one could not imagine the mild Tibetan in his full skirt attempting it). Their movements were very lithe and rapid, a sword in either hand. All the performances from dinner onwards were performed in the light of a great bonfire, in the centre of the square. Kerosene oil was poured on this at intervals to produce a great blaze. It was “burning money” indeed, for every tin has to come up from Kashmir, and before that from the Punjab, by slow stages on pony-back, and is worth something like £20 a tin when it

reaches Leh—and even at that price is often unobtainable. The fitful flickering light of the bonfire added greatly to the fantastic effect of the whole scene.

One and a half hours had been allowed for the dinner; the evening dances had begun at 9.30—by now it was nearly eleven. The boat and the Amban was some of the finest acting one can see anywhere. A man who wore round him a paper and wood-framed boat, kept it rocking in a heavy sea all the time by walking sideways, his legs showing below the boat; but at a little distance the illuminated boat, with a Chinese lantern alight rocking at either end, and the passenger—up to his waist, supposed to be sitting in the boat—was truly realistic. The man was the Amban, we concluded, which is the name of a Chinese official. He went across the seas to woo a lady—who appeared in a sedan chair. He seemed unsuccessful and had to rock home again, being gradually drowned in very high seas (by the antics of the boat). It was all a very comic affair on dry land, and needed “some” acting.

The women’s dance was done at our special request, though not on the programme.

There were seven of them, the village band accompanied with squeaky music, the men whistling. They are the King's Dancers, women who only dance before the King and the Wazir, the heads of the Tibetan and Kashmir departments of the local Government. They are all women of good families and married, most were not young or good-looking. The *dance* is a *very* slow walk—more like a drill—one behind the other, accompanied by opening and shutting of the hands and such movements, and always with the eyes downcast—they may not raise them before the King. First, they knocked their china cuffs together in greeting at the start and at the end, the greeting which they only do before the King and Skushok. These women, one from each chief family, dance before the King as part of the tax on their families. The men, as part of the payment on their side, are obliged to lend ponies when wanted to go up and down the road with travellers' luggage. There is nothing savouring of the nautch, as done in India, in this dance, and nothing immoral connected with it. The dance is "national," and is passed on to each generation. It

represents the seasons: winter to spring, for instance, is shown by the hands tightly folded and slowly opening, as do the buds in spring.

We were ready for bed when at 11.30 we left and broke up, but more than glad to have just arrived in Leh in time for this. The days in Leh were warm, the nights cold—and this was their warmest time of year! From the Hebers' garden is a wonderful view beyond Leh across the bare desert, past the green line marking the Indus Valley to the mountains of the other side of the valley, snow-peaks white against the bright hard blue of the Tibetan sky—peaks almost all 20,000 feet or more in height. Near sunset the whole panorama takes on opal hues, the sand glows a rich ochre-yellow to red-brown, the shadows on the hills purple-blue.

We had a planned programme for our twelve days in Leh, for there was plenty to see.

On the very next day after our arrival we went to call on the King and Queen.

Four of us, Dr. Heber, Mr. Guyer, Mr. Kunick, and I, started off at 8 a.m. riding four nice horses, got for the occasion. It was an "especial" opportunity, as Mr. Kunick,

the Swedish Padre-missionary, was leaving Leh in a week's time, after thirteen years in Tibet, to go on leave via India and England to Sweden. He was to march round by the Kangra and Simla way, and would pass near the place where the Queen had come from. He therefore before leaving went to see her to offer to take any messages from her to her own people. Reliable means of sending news is scarce. Already we were living in medieval days.

So we took the opportunity, and went with Mr. Kunick. Dr. Heber had only once before been over to the King's royal village of Stok, so he accompanied us. I rode Hausman, a lovely fat brown strong Yarkandi—my fear was lest he should want to take the desert at a gallop!—as I have not the same seat riding astride as side-saddle. Stok is ten miles from Leh—the whole width of the Indus Valley. We rode down, over the sandy open plain, crossed the Indus where it is broad and eight little bridges consecutively cross it, with strips of low-lying pasture-land in between. Up the sandy plain on the farther side, past long prayer-walls, we rode to the castle of Stok. The horses scampered

up the steep path and steps cut in the hill, and into the castle courtyard.

Here we dismounted and were met by the King. He was quite young, perhaps twenty-four, wearing a long plain Chinese blue cotton robe, or coat, which fastened at the side, and a black tight cap. We went up steps to the chief room—old woodwork, a common wooden flight of steps, and an outhouse or two, and through into the guest-room. This seemed almost to overhang the rock-cliffs on which the castle is built, and the view was wonderful and very extensive : the fields of Stok and up the whole Indus Valley, and across to Leh away opposite. The Queen, her small lively little daughter of six, and the Queen-mother were in the big room to receive us. We shook hands, with many “Ju-ju-le’s”—the polite greeting on all occasions. We talked, and I counted the turquoises on the Queen’s perak—no less than 279 ; so that when she complained of constant headache, the reason was not far to seek. The turquoises were beautiful rich blue stones, six in width and forty lines long. She, of course, knew nothing but Tibetan, which Mr. Kunick and Dr. Heber know well.

It is a pretty-sounding language, all mono-syllabic, and suggests the old rhyme of "ding-dong-bell." I was allowed to photograph the altar at one side in this same reception-room, over which hung photographs and an old banner, portraits of the Dalai Lama and other celebrities to be worshipped. In front of the altar incense burned, and seven little brass cups (always an odd number) held holy water, tiny lights, etc., before a picture of Buddha, and a prayer-bell. Two little cases held idols, figures of incarnations, former Skushoks, etc. They seemed pleased to have the family altar photographed, and then the Royal family themselves. I have since sent these photos to the King.

Butter-tea was brought, which was more like unsweetened cocoa than anything—thick and brown. Before your cup is empty it is refilled by the Tibetan attendant with a long-handled spoon; the cups are very tiny and handleless. At last you leave your cup—still full. This is quite polite. Then we were taken round, on to the roof, where we saw a panorama of mountains and valley. At each corner of the flat roof were tall prayer-flags, surmounted with a yak's tail, which is holy.

There was no objection at all to my photographing everything and everybody. We gave our little presents : old potatoes and lettuces and cabbages for the King—delicacies of which he is very fond—a silk handkerchief for the Queen, and a doll for each of the two tiny girls. The King then asked me to take a picture for him of his castle, and of the retainers and the Lama priest, all of which I did. Then we returned to the living-room and had a meal. Before each of us a brass tray was set, piled on one side with cooked rice, and holding as well three tiny china bowls of curry, flavoured onion and greens and meat. This was very nice. It was followed by sweet rice, and bowls of hot milk.

In the room, which was large and low, and supported across by pillars painted and carved, were four low sofas or divans, on the floor, for guests, and a bed-seat for the King. The King was a simple youth—the Queen told us she did the revenue and money matters, as he was stupid ! His father, the real King, has abdicated in favour of his son, to give himself to a life of meditation—or rather he no longer officially “lives,” for while the succession goes from father to son, the King

is always an incarnation of the first Priest-King. The King is reincarnated in his son, so the old King had to be regarded as no longer alive—his actual personality has been passed on to his son, the King—while *he* lives away from men somewhere unknown in the mountains, where food is taken to him. The original King had a squint, and so this has been in the family; this young King has *not* one, so has to try and develop it, or there will be doubt as to whether he *is* a true incarnation of the original King. He is a priest-king, “after the order of Melchizedek,” so as he walks along, the young King blesses the people with his hand, as the Skushok would.

After four or five hours there, with many more “ju-ju-le’s” and “dik-dik-ju’s” (which means, “I’ve had plenty, thank you”), we left. Before leaving the King gave us a cake of yellow Tibetan tea, some “shortbread” biscuits made by the Queen herself; and she gave me a very nice turquoise. We took tea by the river, and enjoyed a canter home over the great stretch of sand in the sunset.

One lives the simple life here. There are

no mehtars in Leh ! My boy Hasan is horrified at the existence of polyandry, a wholly new idea to him. As for the Pathan servant, *he* thinks them hardly human, lower than the hubsches of Africa where he was on service. But though they have polyandry, long hair, and are idol worshippers, we point out that they never steal, never lie, and never take life—the three things committed every day, and thought nothing of, along the Afghan Frontier ; and he has no answer !

I must say something, not about true Buddhism, which may be read up in books, but about the Buddhism of Ladakh, which is very different, and better described as *Lamaism*.

There are in Buddhism, and that is all still at the heart of “Lamaism,” in the *Wheel of Life*, six stages or circles.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. The <i>beasts</i> or animals II. The <i>Yadaks</i> or demi-beast-men III. <i>Men</i> IV. <i>Demons</i> V. <i>Demi-gods</i> VI. <i>Gods</i> | } and these lead to VII, which is <i>Nirvana</i> , absorption into the whole. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Buddha is there—ahead—absorbed. The Skushoks could have got there and gone into Nirvana, but they have stayed back to help men. So they are worshipped, and every monastery has a head Lama or Skushok, who is the incarnation of that particular monastery.

The *nuns* are not on the same level as the monks, but do the service of the monasteries. They have their hair shaven, and wear caps like the men, and long similar gowns, but sheep-skins on their backs instead of the shawl over the shoulder. The Tashe Limpo and the Dalai Lama of Lhasa are over the Skushoks, for they are the chief and original incarnations.

The ordinary man or woman is spending his lives in the varying circles, never resting, going up or down according to his work in this life. It is indeed a “vicious circle”!

The most-written prayer in the world is said to be *O Máni padmi hun*. Its meaning is uncertain, and the monks themselves will tell you they don’t know what it means! It may be “Oh, the jewel of the Lotus”—an obscure meaning, but worth noting. As the drop of water, resting on the lotus

leaf like a sparkling diamond, drops off and is lost, absorbed, in the water of the lake, so may I at death drop into and be absorbed in the Eternal Unknown. That is, the Buddhist ideal is to attain Nirvana, Nothingness, Non-existence—to be lost in the Divinity ; and this a higher, more selfless ideal than that of the Mohammedan Firdans, but perhaps no more satisfying. The vagueness—the loss of all *personality*, or conscious existence of oneself or of others.

Compare or *contrast* the meaning of Christ's "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise": "This day," what hope!—"with Me," what companionship!—"in Paradise," what perfection!—and all immediate and certain promises—a joy of certainty through it all. The Buddhist ideal to lose oneself ; the Christian ideal to find oneself, to begin to live, and love, and serve, and know. Leh is under Lhasa religiously, not politically—hence the importance of the Dalai Lama, the chief religious ruler.

We have a British Consul in Lhasa and an Assistant Commissioner in Leh.

When a Skushok dies, a baby born at the same time is "divinely" discovered by the

Tashe Limpo, who says where it will be found, and what it will be like—and he, the baby, is the reincarnation of that Skushok of that particular monastery. The baby is left with his mother for two years, taken then into the monastery, and at the age of five or six he is invested as the Skushok or head, though he does not take over the rule till he is seventeen.

The rule of the lama priests is democratic. Any child may be thus “divinely” chosen to be a Skushok—it may be the child of a very poor, uneducated field-woman, or one of a rich household. Indeed, every Tibetan family is expected to give one son or daughter to the Church, to be monk or nun—as many Roman Catholic families do in Ireland to-day.

We naturally were anxious to know the result of the little Christian mission in Leh on the stronghold of Lamaism.

One lama has become a Christian, and is now the evangelist at Kalatze—we saw him later. One lama who helped the missionaries in translating the Bible became so impressed that he was at heart a Christian. He remained a lama, but at his death gave his son to the missionaries to be a Christian.

The son is Joseph, the first ordained Tibetan in Ladakh, ordained two years ago, and now in charge of an out-station.

On the Sunday we had *three interesting experiences*, “types” of religious ceremonies—a Tibetan Christian service in the morning according to the Moravian Church, a visit to a Buddhist monastery in the afternoon, and a Holy Communion service in the evening, in English, but conducted after the order of the Moravian Church.

The Tibetan Service.—There were some forty there, including seven missionaries—five being the sum total of the place, and two visitors. It was taken by the schoolmaster, Dr. Heber playing the organ. The women sat on the right and the men on the left, all on the floor on neat matting. There is no purdah of any sort; in fact one is immensely impressed with the equality of men and women—they meet in the street, greet in a friendly way, and chat, all perfectly naturally, and this in a country comparatively near India, with its polygamy and purdah system. Women can own land in their own rights, and rich women can choose their own husbands, one woman often having

two brothers. A case was known in recent years of one wealthy woman and her seventeen husbands ; but polyandry is dying out. It, of course, keeps the population down, and may have been kept up for that reason in a land which can only support a very limited number of inhabitants.

The church was a simple little room—whitewashed, a simple table in front, a chair for the preacher, and a white cross on the wall behind. The service was short, simple, and real. We stood for prayers, sat for hymn-singing, and used the Moravian book. After service the Tibetan children all had romps and running-about games to enliven them before Sunday school, for which they gathered. This Mrs. Heber took, and dried apricots and games seemed a natural and sensible introduction, and they all entered into it and loved it in consequence.

In the afternoon we went over one of the two chief Leh monasteries. It is well kept up, and has lately been done up for the recognition service of the new incarnation, who was a tiny child. His brother, King of some district, was there, and he and the lamas showed us all over the gompa.

One entered by a little stony path from the fields, a large courtyard, with rooms on three sides, and a large two-storeyed block facing us. There were dogs innumerable everywhere, all one kind and colour, but loose—not like the fierce mastiff dogs kept at some of the gompas which year in year out are never off their chain.

Up the big front flight of steps at the entrance of the two-storeyed block, and we were on the verandah or open porch of the monastery. Here four or five monks and as many nuns were about, the nuns sifting grain through sieves, and the monks apparently doing nothing !

Two of the nuns were quite young girls, and one was old ; all wore the cap like the monks, and shaved heads, but they looked dirty, uncared-for, and hard-worked. Even in this entrance-hall or porch there was plenty to see, for on all the three sides, on walls, roof, and pillars, were paintings—flowers in green, blue, and red, rather crude designs, and large paintings of the gods—I hope not portraits ! On one side was the good, on the other the evil gods or spirits. And on the side wall was a perfect painting

of *The Wheel of Life*, with its six divisions—gods, demi-gods, demons, men, demi-men, and beasts.

The Wheel stands for meditation, and for continuity. These six states we—(no, not I, thank you ! but *they* !)—continually revolve in, according to our behaviour in each existence. In the spaces are drawings of the inhabitants, demons, men, gods, etc., fighting and biting, or placidly reigning, according to their kind. In the centre of the wheel another little circle of three creatures, a black sloth or bear, a grey dove, and a green serpent, representing *stupidity*, *lust*, and *anger*—the three things which bind all men to the chain or wheel of life. Round the outer circle are “phases of life” and animals and men—the shapes elongated to fit the circle ! Everything in Buddhism is cause and effect. Only Kindness can break the chain, and he is a good god with twelve hands because he is always helping people ; he is called Dechok, the blue devil. Devil does not suggest any *evil* spirit ; a devil may be good or evil, or “inter” class, indeed ! The whole wheel was some ten feet across, covering the wall.

Inside we went into a big room, the refectory. It was dark, and smelling of incense. On either side was a row of mats and stools, and food-bowls placed on these for the monks, who eat, as they do everything else, by routine. At the end of this aisle thus formed was the altar, behind it a huge image of Buddha, and alongside of him, according to their respective rank, many images of many incarnations and skushoks—this line of images was continued along the edge all round the room behind the monks' seats, and in the half-light one had the eerie feeling that the place was peopled with these weird, motionless figures.

The altar was in front of the great idol, carved and hung with old tapestry. On it were rows of little brass bowls, for flour, scent, holy water, and one row held rancid butter, which burnt, tiny lighted wicks hanging over the bowls. This burning butter added a peculiar odour, which was not very pleasant. There were pictures, embroidered or painted on banners and hangings, of skushoks and other celebrities, and peacocks' feathers on the altar in a brass vase, all having some hidden meaning. Beside the altar is a

throne-seat; this is for the Skushok or incarnation of the monastery. Every larger gompa has its own Skushok. In front of his seat, which is never occupied by anyone else, is a small stand, and on it the bell, the "dorji" or thunderbolt, and the hand-drum, used in all services. In front were seven bells; all had dorji-shaped handles. The dorji is supposed to represent a thunderbolt, and this is always in the hand of the Thunder-god, one of the chief deities. It is made of copper and brass, and dumb-bell shaped.

I was able later to buy one of these bells, one which is at least two hundred years old, the *face* of the Buddha above which the dorji handle comes being completely worn away from use. I also obtained a dorji, and a prayer-wheel full of prayers. These are usually removed before the wheel is sold to outsiders. I bought the whole collection of Buddhist religious curios collected by the German missionaries, who were sent away in the war and compensated. A small lama trumpet and a hand-drum, only used by lamas in religious ceremonies and regarded as sacred, are among my collection. Also a half-skull, set with turquoises and a large

garnet—this (probably Mohammedan, certainly not Buddhist !) may only be used by lamas, either to eat out of or as a begging-bowl.

To return to the gompa. Going round at the side behind the great idol, we found ourselves in another room, equally dark and musty, and again full of idols. Some of these were very old and were in glass cupboards. On one side was the library, where was a great collection of very ancient books, mostly in scroll form—sacred religious books or the books of the Kings. In every room old silk banners of every size and age, mostly green or blue, were hanging from the roof. Many of these are priceless, and can never be sold. I, however, did get one from a monk of the Lama Yoru Monastery, on our homeward journey.

From this room we went up a small stair on to the roof, where we had a very fine view. Two lamas accompanied us, but the Teacher Lama, Lobsang, an old friend of the Hebers, was absent that day. He is doing duty for the Skushok, the child of six who is the real incarnation, until he comes into power as the head of the monastery in some ten years' time.

At each corner of the square roof was a pole, with frills of coloured stuffs all round, and a holy yak's tail surmounting it—all to keep off Evil. All along the edges of the roof were sticks, stuck upright, and bits of white muslin and rags tied on to them—all prayer-flags. Indeed, no house, however small or poor, was without this simple mechanical form of religion—by proxy; for every flap of the rag in the wind is a prayer.

In one part of the roof is a little wooden room, like a skylight, built over the head of the great idol, who is too large to be contained in the one storey. His head pokes through the roof, and must be protected by this wood and glass shelter built round it. We were admitted to the lower room where the great idol stands—in the room behind the Great Buddha who sits behind the main altar, and is not so large.

The great idol is *Avolakita*, a good idol, who is reincarnated into the Dalai Lama, and who is the particular god of this monastery. Indeed, the Dalai Lama *is* Avolakita. He is the helpful god, apparently a woman, and kindly—represented here with a thousand

hands and a thousand feet and a thousand heads—spreading all around the figure fan-like. The figure seated is about twenty to twenty-five feet high. It has been remodelled lately, and coloured and gilded, the draperies being especially touched up. In fact, it was not completely finished.

Round each hand are circles of smaller hands, beyond the feet a thousand little feet, altogether looking like a show, and a thousand tiny heads forming a pyramid above the actual head of the idol. Beside the huge idol was a little house, not yet complete, and only an eighth the size of the idol ; that was, however, of no matter, as his spirit, the real Avolakita, was to inhabit it, whenever he required a change. The colour-washing of this, too, was not yet finished.

In another monastery we saw a god who was quite new, in fact, only just made. He had been made on the spot, not brought there, the lama-priest calmly told us, and had taken three months to make. In front of this idol were offerings, which are never removed—and never (perish the thought !) stolen, however poor the passer-by may be : the offerings are “devoted.” Offerings are

given by great sinners needing her particular help, we were told. Cowrie-shells were given by poor women, darning needles by the men, and many of both lay at her feet. There were three or four gold bracelets, large solid gold ones—given by women who were sinners. It was not that the women were the greater sinners, the lama volunteered, but that they were always more repentant !

A few lamas were among the offerings. After the body of a lama is burnt, that which is left (the mineral part of the bone) is taken and ground up, then mixed well with damp clay, moulded into the shape of a little sandwich, and dried. All Buddhists are burnt, I understand ; only lamas are potted, and their ashes may then be “offered” or be put inside a chortan for a memorial to them.

We left the monastery then, and after the strange idols, man-made grotesques, and shut-in dank smells, it was refreshing to see the great white peaks and blue vista across the valley, fading to purple in the evening shadows, and to feel the fresh air and great expanse around, beyond the monastery wall. How can they devise demons and devils to paint on their walls and meditate on con-

tinually with the untainted grandeur and beauty of nature all around ? It seemed unanswerable !

Is it mainly the desire for a middleman, the felt but half-understood need of a mediator ? The Buddha is in Nirvana, and is therefore never reincarnated, some books say—but the other gods and incarnations, including the Skushoks, have deliberately stayed back to help men.

Another god is known as Omamaranidzi-wanteyesawhaa, or, for short—Threpidmed.

I have before referred to the prayer “*O Máni padmi hun.*” The phrase is said to have been used by Buddha the Gautama himself. Dr. Heber thinks the more probable meaning of the phrase is that in the first letter you have the Buddhist Trinity, and that each letter represents one of the creations.

There are two sects of the lamas, the Red and Yellow. The Red Lamas reach Nirvana by meditation on the last letter, the Yellow Lamas by meditation on the first letter. This is because the probable meaning is that each letter represents one of the creations or circles, as follows :

Ō = the gods.

má = demi-gods.

ni = men. Máne *may*, however, mean
jewel ; suggesting the old idea
“ Oh, the jewel of the Lotus ! ”

pad = beasts.

mi = yiddaks or men-beasts.

hun = the demon under-world.

Meditation on this phrase is the way to Nirvana. Let me give the receipt which I have copied.

There are two degrees of meditation—subjective, that is, self-meditation, and the other objective, that is, with an object before one outside of oneself. In *self-meditation* one considers oneself looking out on all the gods sitting in the other circles, exclusive of the circle where oneself is. There are eleven circles ; sixteen gods in each of the first five, other gods in the others, and finally in the outermost and the eleventh are the elements. The outermost circle is made up of the four elements, earth, water, fire, and air—the earth is always represented as yellow, water as blue, fire as red, and air as green. One then proceeds to let the outer

circle dissolve itself into the next circle, and so on until everything has dissolved finally into the elements, and then the completion is that “oneself” that *was* dissolves into Nirvana, disappearing as smoke does.

In *objective meditation* exactly the same method is pursued, but a copy of the picture (or letter) is used as a help. The letter is read *upwards*; this is the letter by which the Red Lamas reach dispersion, absorption —Nirvana.

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After our visit to the monastery, we returned to Sunday evening supper, and after that the Holy Communion service, after the Moravian Church.

We were eight in all, and it was held in the Kunicks' house. The Moravian Prayer Book is like that of the Church of England. The Communion service itself was shorter than in the Church of England; and the thought was rather that of the family more than the individual. First a hymn, then two or three voluntary prayers, another hymn, verses for the dedication of the Bread; then while It was handed round, as we stood to

receive, a verse of a hymn was sung. Each held It till all had received, and then all partook together. A pause for silent prayer, then the verse of a hymn still standing, while the Wine was passed round from hand to hand direct till it reached the minister again. Another hymn, during which each shook hands with the nearest person on either side, to show the fellowship; and one or two prayers, kneeling, closed the service. Nearly half was composed of singing, at frequent intervals.

We had had three new and interesting experiences in things religious in the day !

On Monday we went shopping in the bazaar. Such quaint shops. Behind the shops tower the gompa and castle of the King of Stok. We went into two big Tibetan merchants' houses—into their big open upstairs reception-rooms, where carpets, cushions, and quaint divans were arranged for guests, beautiful metal pots of Lhasa beaten-work, priceless cloisonné china (from China), furs, and turquoises which are sold by weight. I gave seven pounds for three beauties. Again we went to the Yarkandi serai, bought big thick native coats, woven

without a seam, at 3s. 8d., and rugs for floors at 2s. 8d. each.

We went to the Residency, which is next the Mission Compound, and since it is the old Palace, is a beautiful house, with a quaint painted Chinese arch at the entrance, and the grass lawns are studded with chortans. There is a wood of beautiful trees, the biggest in Leh, and from the flagstaff in front a wonderful view of blue hills through the green and the sandy-yellow valley below.

A party of us—there were thirteen English people in Leh—met for tea on July 27, and then went over the castle and monastery on the hill behind. After a very steep climb up the face of the rock, we were rewarded with the view of Leh spread out below with its green crops, and the desert and peaks beyond. At last we reached the castle, built into the rock-ledges. We went in, then up queer little twisted corners and no less than eight different sets of steps and ladders to the courtyard—the largest square of the castle, used for religious dancing.

It was open on one side for the view, and

a sheer dead drop over the edge of the parapet to the little mud houses of Leh at the foot of this great natural fortification. On three sides were more storeys built up into the rock behind. We went through long dirty stable-like passages, turnings, windings, quaint doorways without doors, up more rickety stairs, and into the “chapel” or altar-room of the King—when he is in residence. Just now all was empty, as he is at Stok most of the summer. Stepping over the threshold of the doorway and down two or three steps, we found ourselves in the “chapel” built in the rock and were met with the same shut-up, dank smell of incense and burning rancid butter.

The lama who was showing us over lighted two little “butter-lamps” on the altar of the row of ten or twelve which stood there, and we could see round a bit. On either side were rows of pigeon-holes in wood cases, containing old books, probably the Royal Records, all very old at any rate—possibly three or four hundred years old. On the walls were again paintings of men, beasts, and demons, and writing, much worn. Behind the altar were three large gods, and

smaller ones on either side. All had their faces covered, which is done in some monasteries, and it brings great misfortune if they are uncovered more often than the prescribed once a year. Above hung old silken banners—of great value and of great dirt.

When we came out again and climbed up more passages and ladders, we finally reached the top roof, and felt ourselves really on “the Roof of the World,” for Leh is higher than Lhasa actually, Leh is 11,600 feet. This monastery is much higher than the one we had been over on the Sunday, which latter is the only one I saw anywhere, I think, on a level with the other houses and the flat plain.

There is, however, one higher point than the castle, to which we now went on. Leaving the castle by its “front” entrance on the other side, under the quaint old Chinese-shaped porch, we climbed up the rock and shale on the side of the hill, rather breathless with the height and the steep ascent. We trudged past the old ruins of the former monastery to the present one on the highest point of this hill overlooking Leh. Even

the castle seemed quite below. Here only two monks live—one was busy worshipping, we were told, and the other received us. This too is old, but less so than the castle. We went into the altar-room, which has in its porch on either side prayer-wheels which they turn on entering. Inside the same altar, butter-lights burning, idols in the dim light, paintings on the wall.

A Buddhist pigtailed pony-man who was with us here stepped in front of the altar and the gods sitting behind it, bent, knelt, bowed his head on the ground, and worshipped. He did this again, then rising from his prostrate position, he kissed the idol's foot. Watching, the words came vividly to my mind—so that they seemed almost to have been spoken—“Unto Him every knee shall bow,” so vividly that I looked round, wondering if the same thought was in other minds as well. Not under these idols, but “unto Him”—a day that must surely come. Again the Moravian motto flashed across one's thoughts as one realised, while one watched this simple idolater, that this idol-worship has gone on through the centuries—with Christ knowing and caring

and dishonoured all the time : “ To win for the Lamb that was slain the reward of His sufferings.”

We went into another big altar-room built separate, and which held a far larger idol, some twenty-five feet high, made of clay or stucco. Here it was that the lama told us the idol had been made there in the temple, as it was too large to make below and then bring up the hill. The upper storey was open, for the head and shoulders of the idol to extend up through. Outside this upper part runs a balcony—a little, narrow, shaky wooden ledge overhanging the precipitous cliff. Prayer-wheels, some fifteen or so, are all round the edge, and on certain occasions priests and people do the circle, going round and round and always one way saying rapidly as many times as possible—for they also “ think they shall be heard for their much speaking ”—“ Ō Máni padmi hun.” There is only room for one person at a time round this tower-ledge. One had the feeling of being perched on the “ bridge ” of a ship, with nothing save space below !

A lad of about eleven, who had been “ a grandfather lama ” for about two years,

came with us here. He had an old, lined, queer little face, perhaps due to the life.

The whole religion is desperately mechanical, rule, form, and ceremony in exact routine—no spirituality was visible, and often a complete ignorance of the meaning of the very rites they perform so assiduously, and the words of formulæ they repeat. That is *Lamaism*, which governs Tibet. From the roof we saw the road winding away to Yaikand, the capital of Chinese Turkestan, once not Buddhist or Moslem, but *Christian*.

The clearness of the atmosphere is remarkable. There is practically no rain here, some three inches in the year, and no dust, for there is no wheeled traffic and no “pukka” roads. The sharp, clear, and very dry atmosphere gives a vivid colouring, and deep purple shadows, very dark in contrast, due to the lessening of the oxygen, they say, in the atmosphere. Some days were cloudy, however.

I went over the Mission Hospital with great interest. Among the thirty or so outpatients, old and new, nearly all were medical cases, heart disease, dyspepsia, etc., and two or three were cataracts. But

among that thirty were eight nationalities and "kinds": Tibetan, Kashmiris, Pathan, Chinese Turkestani, English, Baltis, a Punjabi or two (for there are a few Indian soldiers in the little fort), and lamas, Ladakhis proper. Perhaps it was no wonder in the land "Where three Empires meet." I found—by the way—the book with that title extremely interesting and explanatory while I was up there, it is the best book of many on Ladakh.

The doctor, one trained Christian Ladakhi man, and one trained Ladakhi woman, a Christian also, make up the staff—and there is the Dr. Memsahib to help when needed. There is very little surgery, no traffic accidents, for there is not a single wheeled vehicle in Leh—except the doctor's baby's perambulator! No broken arms and legs from climbing trees, because most of the trees are too small to climb! There is no eye disease but cataract, while Baltistan, so near Ladakh, is full of it. The Ladakhis do not fight or have scraps among themselves, so all this keeps down the surgical side of the work!

The hospital is a pretty little place, flat

mud roofs, one compound with separate small buildings, and some twenty or so beds. Men and women all attend one clinic together, as there is no purdah whatever.

In the bazaar we several times saw some "real" Tibetans, not Ladakhis. These were very dirty and with more animal-faces, and certainly darker than the Ladakh Tibetans.

Among their superstitious signs is this—that most babies and small children have a black mark smudged right down the face, forehead, and nose, to keep off evil spirits. The two small princesses in Stok Castle were much marked.

Not far from the Hebers' compound—where the doctor's house, the padre's house, the schoolmaster's tiny house, and the sister's house (when there is a sister), are all in the one big compound—is a little English cemetery. It is in the Residency grounds, and holds six graves, all of Europeans. The Tibetan Christian cemetery, where Irene Petrie is buried, is on the edge of the desert and has some twenty graves in it. That is in a very dry, bare spot, but these six are under trees in the garden. Two of the traveller-visitors buried there, died, it is

announced, of “thin air”—presumably the height.

Beyond the Residency, not far away, is the largest chortan of Ladakh, a very important one and a place of pilgrimage. It is as large as a little whitewashed house, and has 149 little chortans of varying sizes in circles round. Two famous old sacred trees grow by it. Near by is a big stone standing up on end by itself. On either side an idol is carved, and one is Chumba, the God of Love, the god who is coming again, and is *the reincarnation* expected by the people. Francke says this is one of the most valuable discoveries in these parts. Near the chortan stands what we rudely termed “a Punch and Judy”—one of those little whitewashed boxes one saw here and there, open on one side, just like a Punch and Judy stand, and containing three small chortans, or models in the chortan shape, usually the three colours blue, red, and yellow, to represent the air, fire, and earth, the chief elements, and “the last circle” before Nirvana is reached. On the wall at the back are often paintings of gods ; on one we saw the dorji, the blue devil, the thunderbolt or God of Terror.

On a house near, a fairly rich house, we saw a queer little relic, representing the old idea of *atonement*. In certain parts of the country this form is carried out. The man who is believed guilty of some conspicuous sin, or one who is willing to "undertake" the guilt, leaves the village for a whole year. For that time he never returns, food is sent to him. At the end of the year, another man takes his place, often voluntarily becoming the scapegoat. This is not so much kept up as it was, but as here, representative effigies are made yearly, and burnt. The sin and disease and all things evil are thus supposed to be destroyed by burning with them. When the effigy is partly burnt it is thrown over, and as it blazes the people rush forward to pull out bits of it, sticks or anything that is left—these tied together, with twine and rags stretched between, making something like the masts of a child's boat with the rigging, are nailed up outside the houses of those fortunate enough to get the bits, and there they remain on the walls of those lucky houses whose inmates have secured them. These are *sure* to keep off all troubles, all evil and disease, for at least that year.

One day we went out by the stream, fishing. A little goat ran up, not the least afraid of the dog. He sat on my lap, cuddling down, perfectly tame and clean. The most confiding of goats I have ever seen ! Perhaps it is because the women all wear goat-skins on their backs, so humans do not seem so unfamiliar ! or perhaps because the goats " live in " with their owners.

One great day a party of nine of us, almost every European then in Leh (there were actually eleven), went up the Kardong Pass. We started at 6.15 a.m., and rode on ponies the first eleven miles beyond Leh into bare sandhills over a rough stony path, steeply rising. Indeed we were on " the road " leading to Chinese Turkestan and Yarkand, and, if one went far enough, to *Pekin* itself, a journey of eight to nine months over innumerable mountain passes. Chortans in lines extended a long way beyond Leh, and little heaps of rough stones piled here and there near the path with horns of the wild sheep or makhor on the top attracted our attention. These were put up to " diddle " the demons, to make them think when they saw a solitary traveller on the

road that after all he was not alone, and so he would escape being worried by them.

Here we found edelweiss, yellow Iceland poppies, purple primula, and michaelmas daises or asters—but only sparsely, *nothing* compared to the wild-flowers and grass glades of Kashmir. Marmots whistled away among the rocks, and occasionally sat up on stones to watch us, the strange invaders, from a safe distance. At the foot of the last summit, and at the end of what could be termed a riding-path, we left our ponies, had breakfast, and then mounted woolly yaks and zohs, which had been sent out the night before, to await us. Both zohs and yaks are wonderful climbers, and still more wonderful on the steep downhill, for with their short sturdy legs they scramble and run, but never stumble, and one need have no fear, as one would with even a mountain-pony over those stones and rocks. The zohs are not female yaks, as has been supposed, but hybrids. They are less furry and go better. The yak is a very fine animal, covered with heavy long hair, nearly to the ground, and immense bushy tails and big horns. Up and up we went, some bare-backed, some

riding with saddles, a Tibetan with every animal, and a string through his nose by which from his back one guided him ! At the summit—all rocks and snow—great crags, black above the white expanse, where there was nothing level for the snow to rest.

For a moment we had a wonderful view of the mighty Kara Koram, before the clouds covered the distant expanse. Behind we looked right across the whole Indus Valley to the great snow-peaks on a level with us on the other side. It was a wonderful day. We had been up 2,000 feet higher than Mont Blanc. We were all rather breathless and a little heady at the end of the day, for it was a 6,000-feet rise and drop again in the twelve hours, but it was a day not to have missed.

Alas ! by the second of August we had to start off again on our journey back.

We rode down, I on Dr. Heber's white "Droma," to Spittok, only five miles, and camped by the Indus River among low wind-blown willows. At Spittok we went over the gompa. It is built on the top of a solitary rocky hill, such a climb, with half a sand-storm blowing over the desert ! We

saw the outer courtyard where dances or receptions are held, and ponies are stabled when visitors, probably other lamas, come. Beneath was a dead drop of sheer rock, and below a carpet of green—and a view up the Indus Valley towards the famous Hemis, shut in by bare sandhills on either side. Every gompa is, inside, much like another : the Wheel of Life and paintings on the walls, the altar, teacher's chair, and Skushok's throne, the rows of gods, and here another room, very dark, behind, with some fourteen images in a long row, all wearing lama caps, and all of various incarnations. The inner rooms are very dark. Outside we went up rough, uneven steps, up and down, near a great black dog with wild eyes, chained and barking savagely. These monastery dogs are "dedicated" to the monastery. Some special festival is held, when blood is sprinkled on them—after which they are not released or let out, and become very savage.

Spittok is the prettiest place *en route* for a camp—indeed, it is the health-resort of Leh, and where the Hebers come for a summer-time change of air !

On our return journey we camped at Busgo,

the gnomiest place of all, full of queer-shaped rocks and tall stalagmites of sandstone. At Lama Yoru I went over the gompa, taking Hasan and a Christian Tibetan boy who was travelling down with us. It is a very famous monastery, high up on the cliff, a tremendous climb. Part of it is balanced literally on ledges of sandstone, and a little room was built right over a chasm. Another was over-hanging an undermined cliff. It looks as if some day monastery and lamas, idols and incarnations, religion and all, will come down with a crash! Here I was allowed to see the inner altar-rooms. It seemed so weird wandering round this queer place alone, unable to talk to the monks. The pungent smell of incense was everywhere, offerings stood before the idols, and there was a large butter-lamp burning, which is never allowed to go out. In a locked room (one rupee opened it !) were the *masks*, hung up in rows, of the demons and spirits, which are worn for the devil-dances. I was allowed to see these, but not to touch.

In the evening after dark a lama came to our camp and sold me a banner!—a thing which is never allowed to be done. Perhaps

he had stolen it, or painted it himself, and wanted money. On its green-and-gold background are painted the five chief gods.

The Lama Yoru Gorge seemed grander than ever on the return journey, far the finest part, except the gorge of the Zogi La, of the whole trek. The bare hills and coloured rocks were left behind again as we neared Kashmir, and the Zogi on our return journey was one vast flower-garden and rockery, impossible in its wealth of beauty to describe. From my pony's back I counted seventy different wild-flowers crossing the Zogi La alone. There were carpets of edelweiss, and blue gentian, mauve daisies, yellow ragwort, pink "coral flower," and rich purple pelargonium. The whole hillside in one part would be sky-blue with a sheet of forget-me-nots; farther beyond the rich verdure of the grass there would be a mass of pink, or of mauve, where one flower grew in rich profusion.

We saw five glaciers up side-valleys. The scenery was very Swiss. One noticed the great change in atmosphere, the wind soft and not so dry, the sky no longer the deep brilliant Tibetan blue, and the sun less

dazzling. We camped on Machoi, the farther end of the Zogi La itself, exposed, but very beautiful, quite beyond tree-level, among masses of flowers. August seemed cooler than July!—which is accounted for by the fact that going to Leh the wind is behind the whole way, and coming from Leh it meets one and makes it cool. Also we divided the stages better, and were used to the marches. At Dras are some curious old stone images, propped up beside the road. In the stones and sand of some of the passes is gold-dust, and at Kalaz is an old gold-mine.

Between Ladakh and Kashmir one passes through the Border country, belonging to nomadic tribes, Mohammedan, but half Tibetan. They are the Mons and Dards—and it is they who largely come down to Srinagar with the yak caravans to trade.

The Red Lamas are alone found in Ladakh. They are the beggar-monks of Southern Europe. *The Yellow Lamas* are more strict, more ascetic, and yet more modern than the red, and are the prevailing sect of Chinese Tibet. There is a remarkable likeness in form and outward appearance between the Buddhist Church in Tibet and the Church of

Rome. About one-sixth of the population of Ladakh are monks or nuns, for each family is expected to give a son or a daughter to the Church.

All the larger monasteries have a *Shushok*, but some of the smaller houses are without one. It seems that after a man has attained a high pitch of virtue, and has thus escaped liability to re-birth in any of the six ordinary spheres, he can, when he dies, either enter the Nirvana he has earned or return to the earth as Incarnation or *Skushok*. *Skushoks* and lamas have an absolute belief in the theory of metempsychosis, by which the reincarnation is discovered when a *Skushok* dies.

The beautiful teaching of the Buddha, all that was eternally true in it, is buried with absurdities, and his wise doctrines corrupted beyond recognition. A visit to Tibet is apt to destroy many illusions. As it exists in these regions, Buddhism is, like everything else here, fantastic, and it is interesting, but it is as degraded a system of idolatry as has ever been practised by a people outside savagery.

The priests themselves have long forgotten the significance of the many complicated

ceremony forms and symbols of their religion, and all that remains is an unmeaning superstition. The laity take a conveniently lax view of their religious duties : it is the business of the lamas. Praying is carried on by machinery, wheels containing rolls of prayers are turned by wind- or water-power, and every time a wheel revolves it is working out the salvation of the man who put it up ; every turn exempts him from some infinitesimal portion of time which would otherwise be passed in one of the six inferior spheres.

As to the people themselves, the men and women in their long, shapeless, heavy frocks, girdles, and clumsy boots, have coarse Tartar features. The men's pigtails give them a Chinese look. The women, from the Queen downward, wear their dowries in the perak, or turquoise-covered head-dress, with the red coral strands often added on the left side, large ear-rings for both men and women, and a necklace of blue turquoises and red coral. They are a peaceable and a "jolly" people, full of humour and good-nature. Polyandry keeps the population within reasonable limits —and therefore prosperous, in an unfertile

region. One sees many women but few children. In Baltistan everything is the opposite: polygamy exists—a Mussulman State—though so close to Ladakh; the population is very poor and diseased, and far too numerous to be properly nourished.

Brothers in Ladakh generally share a “family” wife, the eldest two brothers, for instance, or three brothers. The women have equal rights with the men, and altogether a good position.

It is a land where religion takes outward and visible form only, and where along the wayside one is constantly encountering some signs of the creed of lamas—altars, images, or monuments of some sort.

The language is almost monosyllabic. It sounds pretty, almost like the twang-twang of a stringed instrument. For example, a common expression is “Chi cho chok?”—meaning “What’s to be done?” The usual greeting of respect is “Ju-ju,” and of added respect to an English visitor “Ju-ju-le.” “Ju” is equivalent to “Salaam.” “Jigspo,” another useful word, meaning literally “swanky” or smart. “How jigspo you look” is a great compliment!

And so our trip ended—down from Machoi to Sonamarg, down the Sind Valley, doing the three marches in two this time, to Gundabat, and back by the Anchar Lake again to Srinagar. We had a small excitement in the Mar Canal, as the water was so terribly low (and smelly) that our dunga could barely get through, and that only by all the men available pushing and wading, and we walking on the bank ! The boat bottom scraped the floor of the canal. Finally, we accomplished this last part of our journey, and I went on down the river to Sheikh Bagh and the hospitality of Dr. Janet Vaughan's cottage.

*Part III An Errand of Mercy : The Search for
 Miss Ellis among the Afridi*



MRS. STARR IN AFRIDI COSTUME AFTER THE RESCUE.

Foreword

MRS. STARR has chosen for her part in life the task of ministering to the tribal folk of the Peshawar Border, such of them as chance or need brings to the little hospital outside the city wall. Here, on a dark night of winter, she saw her husband murdered by tribal fanatics. Here, undismayed, she held pluckily to her life's work, learning to know these people and their language. And then came the urgent call which proved her justified.

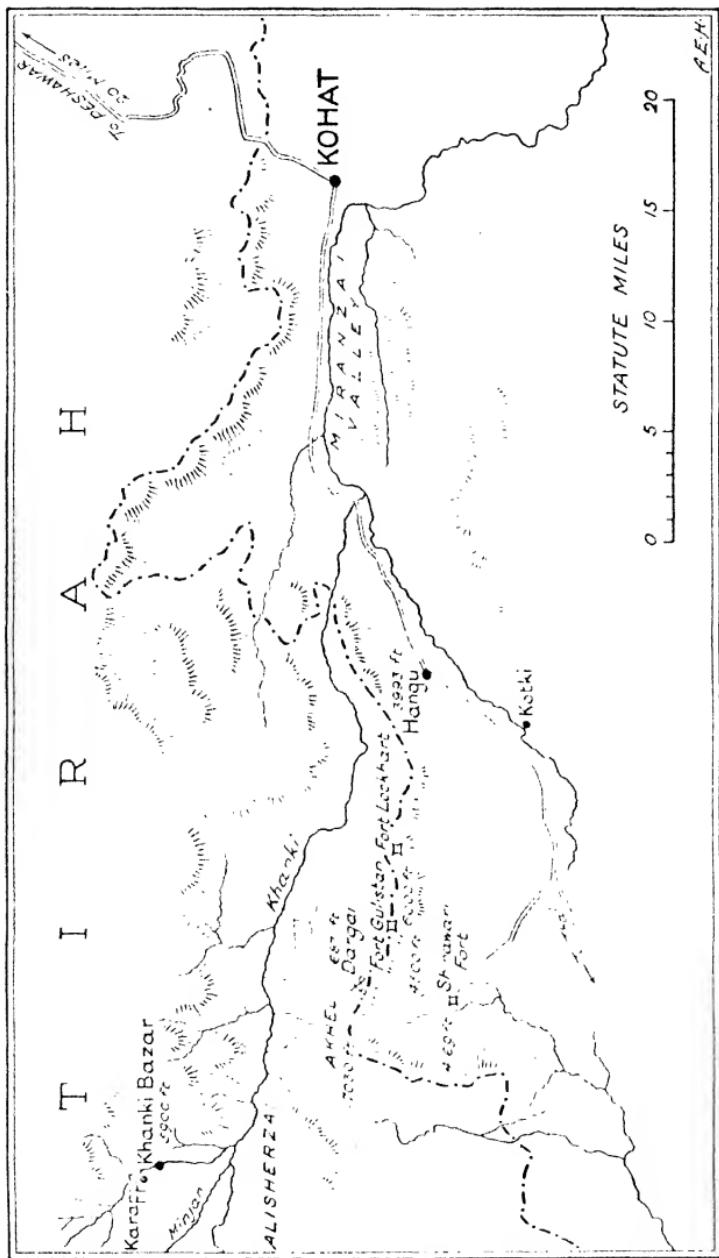
A sudden tragedy befell which found the vast civil and military departments of Government as helpless as men with hands tied behind them. An English girl in the hands of russians somewhere across the border ! All the King's horses and all the King's men could only make matters worse, and British prestige shone dim.

“ But in the story of our land
A Lady with a Lamp shall stand.”

With the charm of her fair face and a woman's courage she carried our standard for us behind those iron hills where no Englishman may pass. She had the great joy of bringing back to us the English girl unscathed and uninjured, and she made a British mark on the heart of Tirah better than all the drums and tramplings of an army corps.

J. L. MAFFEY.

September 27, 1923.



MAP OF THE KHYBER ADVENTURE.

The Rescue

THE spring is the busiest time of the year in all the hospitals on the North-west Frontier, and March and April the fullest months. Just why this is so is difficult to say. Perhaps it is mainly because many cases not urgent, often of long standing, but requiring operative treatment (such as cataracts, old bone-injuries, and the like) then come into hospital with a rush just in time to be treated, and are off to reach home before the great heat of the summer in the Peshawar Plain bursts upon us all.

The Afghans and others have been down with their camel caravans, busy with trades and occupied with the novelties of life in the —to them—great city after the nomad existence of the road. The hill-tribesman, though an Asiatic, is a highlander, and has as great a dislike of the heat as the Englishman from the West.

This is why the end of March and the beginning of April had brought us such

excess of work : sixty-two operations on the Tuesday, March 27 ; thirty-four on the Thursday ; closed as far as was possible for Good Friday ; then forty operations on Easter Eve. So the wards were over-full, and as happens every year in just those same weeks, extra beds were placed along the verandahs of the "serai" or family wards, the beds unnumbered but a patient in each, and relatives spreading their blankets and sleeping happily, strewn upon the floor around.

This is why, though numbers were slowing down a little after April 1, the events of April 19 to 24 were such a complete change : for it was against a background of work that the call into Tirah so unexpectedly came to me, and at the time of fullest hospital routine that I took, as an Indian friend expressed it, "a change into the country."

The in-patients had been seen and dressed ; the doctor-in-charge was starting to work off his list of operations for the day, and hard at it in the theatre with three trained assistants ; the Armenian house-surgeon was seeing the out-patients on the male side with some three assistants also ; while I was

sorting out the out-patients on the women's side, entering names, giving tickets, sending them on to the doctor, and seeing to the dressings, with the three remaining dressers. The dispenser was busy in his department—and ten is the sum-total of our hospital staff.

Now, almost invariably every woman has a baby--her own or someone else's--she has brought to be seen: and every baby when it first enters the room proceeds to howl in vague anticipation of the awful unknown, and until familiarity lessens fear of the cap and the strange white face. Again, every woman tries to push by both her neighbour and the door-keeper in the endeavour to be seen first—for the women of the Frontier have no connection with the proverbial “patient East”!

The result of all this is that even the best-regulated out-patient departments might be likened to a bear-garden as regards noise that unavoidably accompanies the actual work.

In the middle of this, soon after eleven a.m., a letter was handed to me from the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Maffey, asking me to go up to Government House in the

motor that was waiting ; so telling the boys of the staff to carry on with the dressings, I went to the theatre to inform the doctor and then on without delay. It is less than five minutes by car, but during that interval I turned over in my mind what I could be wanted for.

It was four days since the awful tragedy at Kohat, the next Frontier station only forty miles distant, and it and those connected with it were seldom out of our thoughts. During those four days, forty-four in-patients had left the hospital, with or without leave ; some were little children taken away by their parents far too soon after operation ; but all were Afridis, who, fearing political trouble, dared not stay.

Remembering this, I thought possibly inquiries were afoot regarding some of them, for no doubt some we had harboured were suspicious characters, and some I knew were from the Kohat area.

During those days ours was a strange position. Come in thought to the hospital wards for a moment and look round. There they are—dozens of them—from Kabul and Ghazni and all over Afghanistan ; for eighty

per cent. of the in-patients are transfrontier men. Sometimes they come from Bokhara, Russian and even Chinese Turkestan.

There too are Afridis—of just the same stamp, probably of just the same tribe, as the brutes who murdered the Englishwomen Mrs. Foulkes in 1920 and Mrs. Ellis in 1923, and can and do boast of having done it.

In those first days after Miss Ellis had been carried off, I confess it was not easy to go round the wards ; for as we looked first at one patient, then another, into faces, some strong and manly, some coarse and even brutal, we would say to one another : “ Think of *her* in the hands of *that* one—or *that*. ”

And yet here we were, spending time and trouble mending up these very people, and being at times well criticised for doing so by our fellow-countrymen in India too.

“ Is it worth it ? ”—“ Do they deserve it ? ”—“ Why do it ? ”—we are asked, and indeed we are bound to challenge ourselves with just such questions.

And yet the challenge *has* an answer, and I make bold to take it up in this little book.

But this is a digression.

On my arrival at Government House Sir John Maffey saw me at once, and explained to me that vague rumours had at last come through as to Miss Ellis's whereabouts, though the exact place was still unknown. The search-parties, both military and police, that had scoured the country round Kohat, had failed to find her, it was true; but there seemed at any rate reason to believe that she was still alive, and hidden in some spot at the top of the Khanki Valley north of the Samana Range in the independent tribal country of Tirah. Were a military force sent, she would in all probability be ill-treated or spirited away into an inaccessible part of the country, and this was a very possible danger. Sir John Maffey asked if I would be willing to go over the Border, to get to her if possible, and to stay with her wherever she was until she could be rescued. There were risks, but he thought if the plan proved successful, my actual visit would have a very real political effect. Needless to say, I was only too glad he felt I could be of use.

I returned straight to hospital and to my morning's work, which was not yet over;

of course under obligation to keep the matter secret until I should have definite orders. These came an hour later, when I was again sent for.

This time Sir John Maffey went over the map with me, pointing out the route I should go, and that by which the girl had probably been taken. He gave me details as to who should accompany me and their line of conduct; and then, without waiting to change out of my nurse's uniform, I left with the Political Agent of the Khyber to purchase stores and all things that might be necessary for Miss Ellis and myself in any predicament in which we might find ourselves.

Everything was ready by the evening.

I did not sleep much that night. There was so much to consider, also there was the uncertainty of what the following nights might bring. Before morning, however, I had felt the conviction that we should be successful, and that before long. This feeling of certainty never left me, and weeks later the Chief Commissioner told me that it was this which gave him renewed confidence in sending me.

Early on the morning of April 20 I sent on to Kohat as my personal servant one of our best hospital dressers, a Pathan, whom I decided to take in case of emergency work ; and at 8.15 I left with Sir John Maffey for Kohat—and possibly beyond.

Along the first eight miles, the flat road gradually rising toward the hills, we motored. We passed the little villages with their watch-towers ; passed one in ruins, the result of a recent scrap amongst themselves —Afridis against Afridis ; into the neck of tribal territory belonging to the Adam-Khels, which juts out into British India. Here there is a large and flourishing rifle factory, and rifles are turned out in large numbers, of German pattern, perfectly serviceable, and yet made in the quaintest possible little mud-walled sheds and yards. This rifle factory is in independent territory, and supplies the local tribes with rifles, to be used, if so desired, against us. Some years ago I had the interest and the pleasure of going over this factory, where we found more than one man who knew the hospital, and where the inmates showed their welcome by spreading an enormous and impromptu

meal for us on a string bedstead in the courtyard, and standing round in a closely packed circle to watch us get the right side of it.

We looked back down on the green valley behind us, then the road climbed to the summit of the pass, bare and rocky ; then over, and we dropped steeply, winding down and down, to the Kohat Valley lying far below.

Just short of the pass Sir John Maffey had pointed out away to the right the fortified village at the head of a side-valley where the rifles stolen from the Kohat police were recovered by our Frontier Constabulary in February last. Here lived the men who dressed as women when the police came to search, hoping by so doing to keep the rifles hidden under their clothing, and by such disguise to prevent the police from entering what would thus appear to be only women's quarters. The ruse failed. The disguise was discovered. The rifles were retaken ; and the Afridi women taunted their men who had acted but as women, and thus allowed supposed insult on their sex. Then their leaders swore to do a thing before undreamt

of in revenge. Their leaders were Ajab Khan and his brother Shahzada, the notorious Bosti-Khels, head of the gang who, after taking part three years ago in the murder of Colonel and Mrs. Foulkes, had now committed this further outrage.

The Bosti-Khel Valley is famous in that it is in *that* valley that so much of the Frontier villainy has been hatched ; but within a month from the Kohat crime, the whole of that village lay in smoking ruins, the first part of the retribution to be meted out for such a deed.

We made but a brief half-hour's halt at Kohat, for no news had come through regarding Miss Ellis ; then motored on up the Miranzai Valley to Hangu, and still on. Off on the right was the long, even line of the Samana Range, with the Forts Lockhart and Gulistan on its points, to which we might possibly signal, using a white sheet by day or a fire by night, if and when we recovered Miss Ellis. With the map open I tried to learn the direction my job would take me, round to the north, the other side of the Samana and into the heart of Tirah.

Masses of the dwarf palm (*mazri*), hardly

two feet high, covered the otherwise bare dry ground stretching to the foot of the hills on the one side and to the green-bordered stream winding through a line of cultivated fields in the valley on the other. We passed quaint groups of Kuchis, or gipsies, with their families, cattle, and camels, all going in one direction, off for the summer to the cool of the Kurram. Theirs is at best slow progress. A cow will carry on its back among the packs some half-dozen flapping fowls, each tied by one leg to prevent escape; while some sturdy urchin of six may be seen astride bundles of clothes which almost eclipse the small donkey beneath, while he in his turn is firmly holding on to a nodding infant which is seated precariously before him on the donkey's neck. The camels are tied loosely together, the tail of the foremost looped to the nose of the next, forming a long string; and if one camel, fancy-free, starts to wander aimlessly across the road, woe to the motor or pony-cart behind; for whether he has patience or not, the driver must wait till all the ungainly beasts thus strung together have re-sorted themselves into a tidy line. To the nomad time is not;

it is we of the West who rush and worry and fret over such details.

We turned sharply from the main road to Thal and the Kurram Valley on to a side-road which after four miles of rougher going brought us to the "terminus"—Shinawari Fort, perched on a low hill at the foot of the heights of Dargai, that form the end of Samana Range. We had reached Shinawari from Peshawar, a distance of ninety miles, including the climb up and over the Kohat Pass, in under five hours.

It is easy, on looking over the rapid and successful manœuvre which resulted in the rescue of Miss Ellis, to imagine that the scheme was from the start that we should go in a party to Khanki Bazar in the Tirah Jawaki country and bring her back. This, however, was not at all the case. The whole scheme was based on rumour and nothing more, and it was on rumour and conjecture alone we set out to find her. Because Ajab and Shahzada, Bosti-Khels of the Kohat district, had had as their friends and accomplices in this crime and on previous occasions Sultan Mir and his son Gul Akbar, whose home was in Tirah Jawaki, it was reasonable

to suppose that, since they must hide the captive somewhere, and among those they could rely on for secrecy, they would in all probability make for their friends' home, and that *that* would become their stronghold.

Later it was proved, not only that this conjecture was correct, but that the gang and their prisoner had arrived, on foot all the way, on the very day that clever reckoning had guessed that they would arrive; but conjecture alone was all that at the time we had to go upon.

Again, later on, the Chief Commissioner told me that his worst moment was when, on reaching Shinawari Fort, since still no news whatever had come through, one and all—English officials, the khans, and the Frontier tribesmen of the jirga—were against my being allowed to proceed over the Border *until* definite news of her location should arrive. He alone was for pushing on without hesitation and without delay, and his fearless decision at this moment was the real secret of our success.

On our arrival at 1 p.m. outside the fort we were met by several English and Indian officials, including the leader of our party,

Khan Bahadur Rissaldar Moghal Baz Khan, Indian Personal Assistant to the Chief Commissioner, himself an Afridi, and a band of some forty tribesmen, the Akhel Jirga.

To get to Khanki Bazar we should have to pass through five distinct tribal territories. Now, the Pathan is jealous of his independence above all things, and guards it as though it were his birthright. The border tribes are subservient neither to the Amir of Afghanistan nor to the British Raj, and the King's writ does not run in transborder territory. The elders of each tribe form a council known as a jirga. And so at the border of each new tribal territory that we were to go through, the jirga met us to accompany us, the men running alongside our horses to conduct us through their area and to hand us over to the next. There were the Akhels, Ali-Khels, Alisherzais, Khardazais, and the Manozais—some loyal, and others somewhat doubtful in their attitude toward us.

No traveller may penetrate into their land, and it would not be safe for even Afridis of one tribe to go through the territory of another, without some security or invita-

tion. So here was the Akhel Jirga, the men who were to conduct us over the first part of the journey. Such a motley crew, "wild men" some would call them, with their rough black beards, dark slate-grey clothing, their belts packed with cartridges, each with a rifle slung over his shoulder as though it were nothing more than a match in weight. But to us they were loyal friends, who warmly shook hands, even with a woman, and who were willing, they said, not only to see us in safety through their own territory, but to go on with us through that of the less friendly Ali-Khels if we were in need of them.

We were some two hours at the fort. While the Chief Commissioner was in council with the Pathans, I again studied my map, and thought out a little speech in Pushtu along the lines he had given me, to explain the situation and our demands to any man whom we might meet or should the need arise for me to address the jirga.

Still no news of Miss Ellis had come through; so after our plans had been settled as far as they could be under such uncertainty, and having fortified ourselves

with a good meal, we left the fort at 3.30 in the afternoon to climb the path, the Chagra Kotal, and cross the Border.

I was prepared to start wearing ordinary khaki, when the Rissaldar said that anyone on the hillside seeing a khaki topi below would naturally imagine that the wearer was an English sahib, and that consequently it might draw fire. So he himself arranged a white turban over my sun-hat, and asked that for the next day's journey I should wear the complete dress of an Afridi woman, which I had brought with me for myself and for Miss Ellis. This, however, I found when the time came was not necessary.

The Rissaldar is an ex-officer of the Guides, and well used to hill climbing and riding and manœuvres of all sorts. He took charge of our supplies in the way of money, I wearing only a bag of twenty-five gold sovereigns which the Chief Commissioner gave me before leaving the fort to use in an emergency, or should I at any time get separated from my friends. This bag of sovereigns, however, I was able to return complete. It was the Press in England that stated that I was armed; nothing would

have induced me to carry a pistol, considering the errand on which I was going, had I even known how to shoot! Our luggage, and medical equipment for Miss Ellis if she should need it, and for any cases of wounds or sickness that we might meet on the way, were packed in yakdans (leather mule-cases), loaded on mules. And so we started; the jirga on foot, the Khans and myself on good horses, and the Chief Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner of Hangu, and the officer commanding the Frontier Constabulary accompanying us up the pass to see us off.

Near the fort one sees a number of white crosses in a walled-in square on the hillside. It is the cemetery of the Gordons who fell in 1897 in the gallant attack upon the heights of Dargai, in which some three hundred Gordons and Gurkhas lost their lives.

A stony but good path winding up the hillside brought us near the summit; and on the border of British territory we said our salaams and good-byes, and I and my Pathan friends rode round the corner and out of sight over the top of the pass. Looking

back, one saw below and beyond the path we had come, the main broad Miranzai Valley, and beyond that again many ranges of hills stretching to the horizon.

In front of us was a deep narrow gorge with a steep descent down to the stony river-bed of what must be, if ever it is filled with water, a rushing mountain torrent. We were soon in deep shadow, the sunlight still golden on the crags far above our heads, and the perpendicular sides of the gorge shutting us in; the watch-towers perched here and there on the isolated points of the hills showing up in the rays of the setting sun.

It was now of necessity slow going. There was no path at all in the river-bed, and our ponies picked their way among the stones and boulders until the track became distinct beside the dry water-course. Near the bank at the bottom of the defile is a spring—a spot well known locally and a rendezvous where travellers meet. An unusual cluster of trees affords a cool shade by day, and round the spring itself a little stone tank has been built to hold the water. Here we halted while the men made their religious

ablutions, after which the mullah who accompanied us led them in prayer, the long deep notes of the "Kalima"—"La ilaha illa 'llahu, Muhammad rasulu 'llah!" (There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God!)—echoing back from the rocks on either side.

Since it was the month of Ramzan, the fast, when no good Mussulman may touch food or drink between sunrise and sunset, and since it was barely six o'clock in the evening, no one, sad to say, might drink of the fresh spring water. To be a good Mohammedan you must keep the fast, you must pray the prescribed formula if possible five times a day, and you must know by heart long portions of the "Quran Sharif." To understand it is immaterial. I have actually known a Qazi, a youth preparing to be a mullah, who, while in hospital in Peshawar, would read by the hour passages from the Arabic Quran, of which, we found, he did not understand a word, and actually he was not sure what language he was repeating. He was, however, reading it correctly, as he had been taught in a Moslem school, and was thereby gaining much merit,

and becoming in the eyes of the people a prophet indeed. Many of the mullahs are, however, well educated in the Quran, and anxious and able to argue its points with anyone ; but this is always an unsatisfactory proceeding, since they consider the Book perfect and verbally inspired, and their own arguments invariably unanswerable.

During both prayers and ablutions four men of our party with cocked rifles were on the look-out from different vantage-posts among the rocks.

To the uninitiated our procession would have appeared a strange one. First rode the Mullah Sahib Abdul Haq, son of the most influential mullah of the district, the Mullah Karborgha, upon whom largely depended the securing of our mission.

In tribal territory the whole power for good and evil lies in the hands of the mullahs, and the success or failure of any scheme depends upon their attitude towards it. What the mullah thinks, the people do. One is constantly reminded that while we British on the Frontier of India, with our railways, roads, aeroplanes, motors, and modern thought, are living in 1923, beyond

that Frontier the people are living to-day in the customs and habits of some six hundred years back. Perhaps, did we but know it, this strange collision of the centuries accounts far more than we realise for the constant friction on the Border.

The fine old Mullah Karborgha is a loyalist. He had three times publicly in the mosque cursed the gang for the crime they had committed, holding such an attack on a woman to be against all Moslem law. He then had sent his younger son, a mullah also, ahead up the Khanki Valley to make inquiries and do what he could, and now his elder son, Abdul Haq, he had sent to accompany us. Since the attitude of the mullah gives the lead for the people, our strength and confidence was very largely in the fact that the Mullah was with us.

Behind the Mullah rode Rissaldar Moghal Baz Khan and I, followed by some half-dozen khans on horses. Then came the rest of the cavalcade, khans' attendants, and the jirga on foot, keeping up at a brisk walk or a steady trot. Owing to the fact of the fast, these men, sturdy and strong though they are, must have found the march very

trying, and one admired and pitied them accordingly.

Where the gorge widens out, the village of Na'amat Salah was on our path; and since it was now seven o'clock in the evening, we halted there for the night. The head man or malik of the village came out at once with the elders and greeted us. They pulled out their bedsteads on the path for us to sit on while waiting for our luggage to come up, and made preparations to welcome their guests. A flock of sheep was driven into a mud-walled enclosure near by for the night, and two of the best kept back and tethered to a bed just beside us, hardly out of arms' reach. The women came out and stood in little groups to watch things in general and me in particular.

Even here, in Tirah itself, it appeared that there was no news of Miss Ellis.

"Is she alive?" they asked me; to which my only reply was, "I was going to ask you that."

I glanced aside as we were talking, and had a small momentary shock when I saw that the two fat sheep were still in the same place beside us, but lying dead with

their throats cut and already in process of preparation for the evening meal. The men had been busy with the job while the crowd talked, and it crossed my mind what practised hands these were that could thus take life when they meant to without a sound or any sign of a struggle.

I was conducted to the women's court-yard, and was given a native bedstead under a shed in the open. It was then dark, and the women, who were hungry after the fast of the day which they also kept, made a fire by my bed and sat round it to eat. They were most friendly, massaged my legs (a sign of friendliness), and brought me food. This was a bowl of goat's milk, a Pathan bread-round (some eight inches across and an inch thick, made of coarse brown flour and without any yeast), thoroughly good but solid to a degree ; and to go with it another bowl containing mashed-up, half-cooked meat with spices. So in this way I had a good meal, although my luggage did not arrive till later.

We sat on round the fire talking in Pushtu, and I felt I was making friends. Although so few miles from the British Border, none

of these women had seen an English face before. Outside I could hear the sound of many voices—for a jirga to discuss the situation began as soon as every man had eaten a good round meal.

The women spoke of Miss Ellis. “Was she not my sister ?”—“Not ?”—“No relation ?”—“And I had never even seen her ?”—“Then why go to so much trouble to find her ?”—“Had I come willingly or by the order of the great Government ?”

When I said how pleased I was to be their guest and to visit their country, they pressed me to come again. They spat freely into the fire—another sign of friendliness.

“Spit too,” said a dear old lady who was evidently the Mother in Israel of the clan, with a friendly smile.

“It’s not my custom,” I said ; “but do you.”—“Not your custom ?” she questioned. Then, priding herself on her second-hand knowledge of the outer world, “But your men do ?”

“Only the poor ones,” I replied with diffidence.

Unrolling my bedding, but not more than was necessary lest fleas or worse should

creep in, and not of course undressing, I laid down for the night. It was not, however, very peaceful. Thin curls of smoke from the dying embers came up round the bed ; women busied themselves keeping up the fire in a big central oven in the open courtyard (for breads were still cooking for the second meal of the night, which must be got over before daylight when the fast began again) ; scavenger dogs yapped and scrapped together perpetually in the yard, and occasionally under my bed ; and outside the jirga were still talking in endless palaver, their low voices blended with occasional deep-toned snores and the steady munching of my horse as he chewed his straw, tied to a post against my bed.

About midnight I suddenly saw the malik by my bed, and was up in a moment ; but he assured me he had only come to tell me not to be afraid and that all was well. His kindness was excessive, but I assured *him* I had no doubts whatever on the subject, and only wanted quiet for some sleep ! After four hours' sleep we were up at dawn ; and after I had had biscuits and a quick cup of tea, I again met the khans who had rested

in the watch-tower, their food having been taken about 5 a.m. We left by 7 a.m.

The river-bed opened out some five miles on near Karappa, where there was no village but a low-walled camping-ground used in the Tirah Expedition of 1897. Here we entered the broad Khanki Valley.

We pressed on through the day. I had biscuits and chocolate in my saddle-bag, so there was no need to stop for a meal, and no one else could have food at all. The feeling grew on us that time was important, though we did not then realise how important the extra hours thus saved were to prove.

We halted occasionally for negotiations to be held as they became necessary, to enable each of the five tribes through whose limit we passed to hand us over to the next. On one occasion there was half an hour's delay. The jirga had met in a field under a tree by a stream close to a "ziarat" (a holy man's tomb). I sat on the other side of the hedge listening to the debate. I understood a good deal more than they knew—and most interesting I found it. "See, the woman understands!" they more than once said in surprise; and another amusing remark was,

“Now we know why the Feringhi [a despised term for the British] rule Hindustan—their women are as their men.”

We forded the river, the path rising on the left bank, the valley widening more and more till it became a series of rolling hillocks on an open plain. There was rarely a tree, but scrub of wild rose, pomegranate, and barberry bushes in flower. In the distance ahead we saw the snow-peaks of Parachinar, while snow lay here and there in crevices on the hillside where we were, making the air fresh and bracing, though the sun itself was hot.

We were at a height of some six thousand feet above sea-level and rising steadily. From the high ground I could now see the even outline of the Samana Range behind us, and realised we had reached “its other side,” as the Chief Commissioner had pointed out the day before we must do.

We met few travellers. When we did they were either men journeying up or down, or women carrying loads of dry grass from the valley up to their village homes. All turned to stare in surprise at a white face with an Afridi jirga. Every man or boy we met was

armed, some carrying such antique-looking rifles that I hardly recognised them as such. At times we were met by parties, who suddenly appeared it seemed from nowhere, like dots on the slopes above, or coming up from the river-bed below. Each man with a glance at the cavalcade would hurry up to the Mullah, clasp his hand in both of his, and greeting him with "Salaam Allah 'akum," would walk beside his horse to get his curiosity satisfied by numerous questions. Then, again clasping his hand, he would go on his way.

Progress would certainly not have been so easy had we not had the Mullah riding before us; and it is even possible that without his presence we might have been fired on. Not once on our up or down journey did the Mullah speak to me. A mullah is considered above such things—not necessarily too "holy," but altogether *above* speaking to a woman. But he was a friend for a' that!

I found the black Afridi chaddar (or sheet worn round the head) was sufficient over my khaki riding-coat to show I *was* a woman, so wore this all the way, Miss Ellis adopting the same costume when we met. In the Khanki Valley we met a man coming down

who, when questioned for news, said he had heard “the girl” was alive and well and somewhere “up there”; but we could not tell if he had any authority for this statement or merely said it to satisfy us. We were approaching Khanki Bazar, near which we had heard she was hidden—and still there was no news.

A letter written by Sir John Maffey on that very morning and sent by a runner caught us up. It bore the original address :

“ MRS. STARR,
Independent Territory.”

In this he said : “ We are worried by getting no exact news of Miss Ellis’s whereabouts. But we are consoled by the conviction that the secret cannot last, and that she is somewhere not far from you. I have just sent a telegram to the Government of India telling them of your enterprise—now that it is too late to stop you ! Do not be disappointed too bitterly if success does not come. It is not going to be easy.”

As we went on, the villages became smaller and scarcer, indeed they were no longer villages proper, but rather single fortified

blocks commanded by their watch-towers. The watch-tower is characteristic of every frontier, and still more of every trans-frontier village. And so a square two-storeyed tower stands at the corner of every village, sometimes two or more ; its base is wider than its summit, and it is built of hard-baked mud like the houses are, sometimes of more enduring rounded stones held together with mud and mortar. It is a native block-house. That sense of insecurity under which the people live makes it compulsory to have someone always on the look-out, lest enemies, possibly the inhabitants of the next "village," should creep up to attack them or to steal their crops or cattle. This condition of affairs results from the system of retaliation for injuries real or fancied known as the blood-feud.

We had been told that we might hope to reach Khanki Bazar by night, but in spite of the fatigue caused to the men by the fast, without wasting time but without undue hurry, about three o'clock we crossed the river to the right bank, and climbing the slope had arrived at our destination. These hours saved proved invaluable.

The term “Bazar” is here a name, and does not imply the crowded, noisy market, the bazaar of every Indian city; Khanki Bazar is a group of tribal forts at the head of the Khanki Valley, immediately surrounded by stretches of well-watered crops.

We stopped at the first houses to make inquiries. A letter was here brought to the Rissaldar; he made no comments on it, and I concluded it was of no importance. A crowd collected in little groups on the roofs, in the doorways, or up the hillside; and finally their curiosity drew them down to us. When they saw a woman, the women collected too, all wearing the tight pyjamas, black tunic, and black red-bordered chaddar—the latter the same as I was wearing, only less clean. I dismounted, and we sat down on the grass and talked—they of course full of interest and curiosity regarding me, my dress, and my object in coming, and highly amused at my attempt to talk Pushtu with the rich brogue of these hill-Afridis. I heard them assuring others that I really was a woman, which gave confidence, and more hurried up.

Remounting, we rode on, and up to the house of the chief mullah of the valley, the

Mullah Mahniud Akhunzada, and dismounted at his door. The crowd who had accompanied us were pressing round, as I thought in welcome ; since this was the house where I had expected to be taken in. We waited. . . . There was much talking and running about. The khans went in and out ; it was evident some discussion was on. What was the delay ? The atmosphere seemed now more hostile than welcome. Evidently my arrival was exactly what it was meant to be —a climax ! The Rissaldar came out and asked me to remount and stay at the head of the path ; Muhammad Akbar Khan mounted and waited with me.

Then two of the local Manozai Khans who had joined us came out, and gave my companion, who was their nephew, instructions to take me to *their* house. We were not allowed even to pass the Mullah's house, but dipped down following a goat-track that led beneath it, then up on the farther side, and scrambling straight up the slope of the hill we came to the house of the chief khan, Subahdar Major Azim-Ullah, and rode under the archway of the watch-tower at the entrance.

Inside this was more like a fort than ever. I was taken through the little narrow court-yard, shut in with high walls pierced by narrow slits to see and take aim through without oneself being seen, and into the square room which formed the base of the watch-tower on the farther side. "Everything in this house is yours," said the Khan Sahib with characteristic Pathan hospitality, and sent his nephew to fetch some tea and walnuts for me.

I now heard the cause of the delay.

The letter that had reached the Rissaldar just before we arrived at Khanki Bazar as translated by him from the Persian of the original was as follows :

"From the Mullah Mahmud Akhunzada who lived in Khanki Bazar to the Mullah Abdul Haq, son of the Mullah Karborgha who had ridden up with us.

"MY DEAR SON OF THE MULLAH KARBORGHIA,

"It is very necessary that you should not come with the Englishmen ; if so, then there is no pardon. Absolutely lady-doctor and her company are prohibited. This is

very urgent order. In default of this there will occur very long fighting.

“Signed and sealed the MULLAH AKHUN-ZADA.”

When this letter reached the Rissaldar, as I have already related, he quietly put it in his pocket, taking no notice of its contents, and not telling me till later what they were. So on our arrival at the Mullah’s house we were refused admission. The Mullah, it appeared, had heard of my coming and concluded that the “sahibs” with me must mean Englishmen, possibly disguised, and as such on no account would they either be given hospitality there or indeed allowed to go farther than where they stood.

The khans, themselves Afridis or Orakzais, assured him I was a woman, and that they alone had accompanied me. Here was a predicament! I was already here; it was now evening; I could not go back; I certainly could not go on beyond the village; and I must be housed somewhere! Then Azim-Ullah, with Moghal Baz to back him, did a fine bluff—and to bluff a mullah is an unusual thing to do.

"I fear till the day of resurrection between your house and my house there will be a feud over this matter. My house tops yours, and we are ready if need be to fight." Then tactfully he continued : "You can't fire on a woman, what *can* you do ? "

"What *can* I do ? " said the Mullah. "I will not take her in—then take her to *your* house," he added as the final decision.

Hence I had the pleasure of being a guest for that night in the house of the Subahdar Major Azim-Ullah Khan, late of the 46th Punjabi Regiment, who had now retired to his home in the hills of Tirah, and of his brother Badi-ul-Zaman Khan. The loyalty of these ex-officers I had heard of from the Chief Commissioner. I was introduced to the younger men of the household ; the house had been turned out ready if necessary for fighting, and there were no women there. I saw with satisfaction that it was as Azim-Ullah had said, the highest house in Khanki Bazar, built into the hillside. We sat round on string beds in the courtyard discussing what had happened and what would ; the senior khans had now gone down to the

Mullah's house to be present at the big Jirgabazi (Council).

By this time we knew that we were on the right track, and that Miss Ellis was between six and eight miles away just over the low kotal at the head of this valley, in the house lent to Ajab Khan by Sultan Mir, his friend and colleague in Tirah Jawaki limits.

We were at Khanki at three-thirty. The jirga with the Mullah and the murderers who were in the place commenced soon after four, Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan having arrived twenty-four hours before from the Kurram. I realised that much depended on the discussions and decisions of these two hours; for though with Miss Ellis located comparatively near to us I longed to go straight on and get to her, I now saw we had reached the crux and what the Rissaldar rightly described as "making trick."

And here, to explain fully what this "making trick" meant, it is well to get a general outline of the Chief Commissioner's whole scheme for the rescue of Miss Ellis. There were three factors; and each had some

part to play. Not one, but three parties had been dispatched.

First, one of the leading khans of the Khyber, Zaman Khan, had been sent from Peshawar to raise from among the Afridi clans of that part of Tirah a "laskhar" or local army. He was to come down by the Bara route from the north above Tirah Jawaki. His object was to bring pressure to bear on the tribes to prevent the gang carrying Miss Ellis farther into Afghanistan ; and if necessary to cut them off and to capture her by force. The part Zaman Khan and his "laskhar" played comes later in the sequel of events.

Secondly, Kuli Khan was sent from the Kurram.

Thirdly, the Rissaldar and myself proceeded from the Kohat side.

Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan, the Assistant Political Agent of the Kurram Valley, was on April 17 summoned to Kohat by Sir John Maffey, who wished to ascertain the steps that had been taken from the Kurram Valley side with a view to tracing Miss Ellis. Kuli Khan reported that messengers carrying clothes and comforts had been dispatched

into Tirah by Major Heale, the Political Agent, immediately after hearing of the crime ; but that they had returned, reporting that no knowledge could be obtained of the actual place of Miss Ellis's concealment. Kuli Khan then obtained permission to set out himself for Tirah, taking with him a tribal malik and a minor mullah, who was a distant relative of the great Mullah Mahmud Akhunzada. This is what happened to him up to the point of my arrival at Khanki.

Kuli Khan's Story

A night march of fifteen miles brought him into Alisherzai Territory, where the leading maliks tried to dissuade him from proceeding farther. Kuli Khan, however, took the line that as a good Mussulman he was fully entitled to visit the famous shrine of the father of the Mullah Mahmud in Khanki Bazar if he wished to ; and pressed on, though obliged to go by a circuitous route twelve miles south then twelve miles eastwards by the difficult Murghan Tangi and over the Murghan Kandao or Pass. In the Tangi or defile the route lay for some

four miles up the bed of a narrow mountain-stream whose precipitous sides at times closed in to a width of barely fifteen feet. From the summit of the Murghan Kandao the towers of Khanki Bazar could be seen in the valley below them, a short five miles to the north-east; and they reached their objective in the late afternoon, covering the distance during a period of some nineteen hours in the month of the fast, and arriving thoroughly tired through lack of food, drink, and sleep.

At the ziarat in Khanki Bazar, which Kuli Khan at once visited, were assembled some three hundred men—some pilgrims from most of the border tribes, others the elders of the Kohat district and of the neighbouring Orakzai and Afridi sections, collected here for discussion over the matter of the abduction. The shrine is honoured for its great sanctity and wide repute; and to visit it and to worship there is to acquire lasting merit; so it was not strange that Kuli Khan, an orthodox Mohammedan, though a Government servant, should come there.

He duly sat in the mosque meditating and worshipping, and gathering what scraps

of information he could. It seemed to be recognised that Miss Ellis was in the possession of Ajab, the Bosti-Khel leader of the gang, though the latter had continued to deny the fact. Towards evening Kuli Khan succeeded in obtaining a brief and hurried conversation with the Mullah ; and owning that the object of his visit was to learn news of the missing English girl, he begged for a private interview to discuss the matter. This the Mullah said he would contrive to give him after he had seen to the feeding of his guests at the evening meal, which was to take place with the breaking of the day's fast at sundown.

The “ langar,” which is an invariable adjunct of every ziarat of repute, is a public kitchen at which the guests of the Mullah are fed at the latter's expense, during the period of their stay at the shrine. The Mullah derives his income from many sources, of which the principal comprises, as a rule, the fixed offerings in kind that he extracts from the tribes within his episcopal jurisdiction. The extent of these varies with the reverence in which he is held by the people, and with the degree of their belief in the

practical efficacy of his blessing or curse. The very genuine faith reposed by the unsophisticated tribesmen in the potency of Mullah Mahmud's formal malediction will be clearly shown presently. Other important sources of income are the land endowments attached to ziarats ; the offerings made in the ordinary course by disciples who visit the shrine ; the often generous gifts of money presented by suppliants for the invocation of blessings on a special undertaking —such as are frequently made by raiding gangs before setting out on their expeditions and finally, it must be admitted, a regular share in the proceeds of such raids.

Kuli Khan sat down to his meal with the rest of the guests, numbering over two hundred. The Mullah Mahmud was unlike the majority of important tribal mullahs, who will sit mysterious and inaccessible in the interior of the mosque engaged in the day-long invocation of the name of Allah, and moved without ceremony among his guests, attending himself to their needs. Nor did he sit down to his own food till he had satisfied himself that every guest had received his portion out of the great degchis

(or cooking-pots) of rice and meat that were carried round by his attendants.

So it was not till 11 p.m. that Kuli Khan obtained his promised interview and brought up the all-important question of Miss Ellis's whereabouts. At first the Mullah denied all knowledge of the matter, and it was evident that his attitude was deeply influenced by his inherent fanatical bias against the Feringhi. Further persuasion and clever reasoning got the Mullah to admit that Ajab and his brother Shahzada had undoubtedly committed the outrage, but that they denied the offence ; and, that, as they were present at Khanki at the time, they should be tackled on the subject early in the morning ; upon which promise Kuli Khan retired about 2 a.m. to snatch a couple of hours' rest before the "mullah-bang," or call to prayer, should sound at dawn.

Nine o'clock on the morning of April 21 found Ajab and Shazada closeted with Kuli Khan and Mullah Mahmud in the former's room, Ajab protesting injured innocence and Kuli Khan urging him to abandon his unreasoning attitude, since it was clear to all that the girl was securely in his possession,

and that nothing need now prevent him from stating his terms for her release. An hour's palaver ensued before Ajab could be induced to admit the open secret of his connection with the raid.

Finally, with the ingenuous air of a conspirator imparting a momentous secret to allies whom he had at length decided to trust, he confessed that Miss Ellis had been brought away from Kohat by himself and his brother Shahzada with the assistance of two friends, and that she had been placed in the tower of Sultan Mir, the Tirah Jawaki raider. He indicated that the motive of his dastardly act had been outraged pride at the successful invasion of his village, and mortification at the position of outlawry and poverty to which he and his dependants had been brought by the discovery in his village of the stolen police rifles and of other articles which had irrefutably implicated him in the murder of Colonel and Mrs. Foulkes.

In explanation of his stubborn and prolonged denial of the facts he declared that, so far from constituting a solution of his difficulties, the safe arrival of their captive

in Tirah seemed likely to be but their prelude; tribal pressure was rapidly converging upon himself and his associates from all directions, and the Tirah Jawakis had threatened to sow their lands with salt and bring their roofs about their ears if they should get Jawakis into trouble by disclosing the presence of Miss Ellis in *their* territory. It had been decided, therefore, that the girl should be removed secretly to Ningrahar in Afghanistan, or to some other spot inaccessible to the influence of the tribes who were working for her release, and, moreover, that once she had been placed in such a position of security, they would continue for an indefinite period to leave the Sirkar (British Government) in complete darkness as to the locality, in order to induce by prolonged suspense a condition favourable to the reception of the terms which it was their intention to dictate.

Kuli Khan, whose one fear had all along been that the gang might slip away to Ningrahar, showed no sign, he tells us, of the dismay he felt at the announcement. On the contrary, he affected to ridicule, as beyond the limits of practical politics, the

threat to take Miss Ellis a farther journey across the wild mountains of Tirah. Was it even remotely possible that a man of Ajab's knowledge and experience could seriously contemplate a plan which would kill, as sure as fate, the hostage he had undergone such risks to secure? He skilfully demolished with a laugh the whole proposition as being below the intelligence of an idiot—except, of course, as a mere threat to impress the foolish and ignorant. Since he himself was neither the one nor the other, he urged Ajab to come to the point without useless delay and declare his future line of action.

After a short break in the conversation, of which advantage was taken to dispatch a letter, clothes, and food to Miss Ellis by a messenger provided by Mullah Mahmud, Ajab and Shahzada announced that they were prepared to surrender their captive on the following terms :—

1. Payment of fifty thousand rupees as ransom.
2. Complete amnesty for the members of the gang and for the other men wanted for the murder of Colonel and Mrs. Foulkes.

3. The release of four men who had been arrested by the Frontier Constabulary in the searching of Ajab's village in the Bosti-Khel Valley.

This announcement was accorded an unpromising reception. Kuli Khan met it with a derisive reference to the Pushtu equivalent of the proverb of the frog who would be a bull ; the Mullah, with an impatient exclamation, suggested the abandonment of further negotiations, since the gang appeared intentionally to have framed terms which it was obvious that the Government of the Feringhis could never accept. The bargaining thus commenced in true Oriental style ; in similar fashion it was continued through the greater part of the morning of the 21st, and early afternoon, till it was clear, at length, that no bridge could be found to span the gulf that separated the parties. The gang did undoubtedly modify their first preposterous attitude ; but the close of the discussion left them, nevertheless, with an extravagantly false sense of their power to dictate their demands. Kuli Khan, realising that there was nothing to be got

out of them, adjourned the meeting and accompanied the Mullah to the mosque.

For the next couple of hours the Khan, sitting in the cool shade of the shrine, racked his brain to discover a method whereby he might frustrate the probable intention of the gang to remove Miss Ellis from Tirah. This was now the pressing danger. He realised that it was a comparatively easy task for these hardy russians, who had brought her to Tirah in complete secrecy, to carry her thirty miles farther, north or west, to country from which her early release would be beset by almost insuperable obstacles. The utter desperation of Ajab's attitude had been clearly established in the course of the morning's discussions. Ajab had expanded on his determination to commit an offence such as would make history. He had described how, a fortnight earlier, he and Shahzada had waylaid a couple of officers near the Kohat fort as they were returning from mess, and how the inexperience and impetuosity of Shahzada had caused the failure of that attempt. He had boasted how, on the two evenings immediately preceding the abduction of Miss Ellis, they had

lurked about after dark in the Kohat cantonment seeking an opportunity—and how at last they had entered the Ellises' bungalow and remorselessly carried out their fell purpose. He had given ample proof of headlong courage and determination, and it was obvious that, having won through the dangers of the actual raid and the retreat to Tirah, Ajab and his confederates were unlikely now to risk the smallest chance of failure. Unfortunately, also, the gang had shown a thoroughly practical realisation of their position of vantage and of the additional gains that were likely to accrue through playing a waiting game.

Revolving these matters in his mind, Kuli Khan decided that his immediate task was clear, even if the method of achieving it were not. He must at once establish personal touch with Miss Ellis, must go to her, or else, by some means, induce Mullah Mahmud to send for her to Khanki Bazar and keep her there under protection.

He was on the point of enlisting the Mullah's assistance when a sheikh entered and announced that a party of Government officials accompanied by a son of the Mullah

Karborgha and an English "lady-doctor" was reported to be approaching from the south. The news came as a bombshell and, for the moment, threw the Mullah off his balance. The semi-official presence of a single political officer from the Kurram was bad enough ; but how would the entry into Tirah by a formal deputation of Government officials, accompanied, actually, by a Feringhi, be regarded by his supporters in Afghanistan, any serious misunderstanding with whom must react unfavourably on his power and influence in tribal territory ?

Seriously perturbed, the Mullah issued confused instructions to his attendants ; the approaching party was to be turned back ; a warning letter was to be conveyed to them ; the young men were to be dispatched at once to open fire to scare away the intruders. Fortunately, Kuli Khan was able to exert a moderating influence. Why not let the party come on ? he suggested. There was already one English woman in the country, what matter if another came ? The sanctity of the shrine was not so lightly established that it could be compromised by so small a method ; and it would be a standing blot

upon the Mullah himself and upon the name of the ziarat if he ordered fire to be opened upon a woman. The rest of the party were good Mussulmans or the Mullah Karborgha's son would surely not have accompanied them as their sponsor.

Eventually a strongly-worded letter was sent off to the son of the Mullah Karborgha, warning him that the entry of the party into Tirah would be the prelude to serious and prolonged trouble.

It was at this point in Kuli Khan's experiences that we reached the Khanki Bazar on the evening of the 21st. The Rissaldar Moghal Baz Khan and Kuli Khan, who were old friends, met with undisguised pleasure. Kuli Khan told the Rissaldar what has just been narrated ; they discussed the situation together, and decided on a plan of action.

They then returned together to the mosque, where, of course, no mere woman might be present, and held long council together with the Mullah. Skilfully bringing in their arguments, they attempted to show the attitude of their holy Prophet towards Christians, that their religious law could in no circumstances condone the dastardly murder of

one woman or the abduction of another ; finally, they convinced the Mullah that little harm and much honour might accrue if he would but take the necessary steps to secure Miss Ellis from further possibilities of personal danger.*

It was after six p.m. when the Rissaldar returned to me at Azim-Ullah's house to tell me the news, so that I might immediately dispatch a report. He came up quickly and his face showed that at least they had got a move on. "I have news," he said ; "but we must be alone to write the report." In the porch of the little room under the watch-tower that had been put aside for me, Moghal Baz in rapid Pushtu and Hindustani (whichever seemed to express his meaning best) gave me his dispatch which I translated into English and wrote as he spoke.

Miss Ellis had written five letters in her captivity, at the instigation of her captors, stating *their* terms for her release. This showed that they felt they were in a position to demand what they liked. None of these letters had gone farther than Khanki Bazar,

* Kuli Khan's own account is given as translated by and with the kind permission of the Associated Press of India.

and all were brought to me there. I now sent down to Peshawar the report with the good news that Miss Ellis was located, and her own letters which said she was alive and well. I stated that arrangements were practically settled, though not as yet to release her, at least to get her into safety and among friends.

Since it was now dusk, we all went outside the walled-in courtyard, which I had not been allowed to leave in daylight, and sat on the grassy hillside. Below lay the "village," if it can be described as such. It is a collection of separate mud and wattle and sometimes stone fastnesses, each a family home, but each in building and equipment like a complete though tiny fort. Only at the lower end by the river was there a group of poorer huts which might lay claim to be called a regular village. Looking down on Khanki, I wondered which was the house of the millionaire I had heard of, a merchant who visited and traded with Bombay. There was not a brick house in the place, or anything suggestive of wealth, so I concluded he was a myth.

Beyond the river lay the whole wide

valley, and beyond again range upon range of the hills of Tirah, home of the outlaw and loyalist alike. The Khans were anxious for news of the world. They asked me the result of the Lausanne Conference, and how Turkey would fare in the end. They examined my camera, which I had not till then produced, and gave me full permission to use it, for I was amongst friends. They asked for quinine and aspirin tabloids to be doled around ; for if they did not need them that night, they were sure they would at some future date.

Azim-Ullah told me of the other and only time that English had come to Tirah, and had been seen in the very valley upon which we looked down. That was in the Tirah Campaign under General Sir William Lockhart in 1897. It throws a light on the present situation to recall the main features of that campaign as stated by Mr. J. M. Ewart, S.P., in his *The Story of the Frontier Province*, and here quoted by his kind permission.

" In 1895, following on the siege and relief of Chitral by a force from Nowshere and a column from Gilgit, garrisons were stationed

on the Malakand Pass and at Chakdara and Chitral, and the Political Agency of Dir, Swat, and Chitral was constituted. The Frontier tribes had watched this penetration of their hitherto independent valleys with growing anxiety ; above all things the passage of troops in all directions through their territory was regarded as part of a deliberate menace to their independence. Such a menace was bound to rouse the ever-present fanaticism of the Pathan, and appropriate preaching by the mullahs and intriguers set the whole Frontier in a blaze. It began in the Tochi, in a treacherous and fanatical attack where all the British military officers were killed or wounded ; spread in that same month of June to the Malakand ; by August the blaze had spread to the Mohmand country ; a fortnight later Afridi and Orakzai Tirah were alight. Shabkadr was attacked ; the Khyber posts fell, and the pass was in the hands of our enemies ; the forts of Samana had been attacked and the Kurram Valley threatened. This general rising of the tribes necessitated military operations on a scale hitherto unprecedented on the Frontier. Forces went out into the

Mohmand Country, Bajaur, Utmankhel, Swat, and Buner; and an army of forty thousand men under General Sir William Lockhart invaded Tirah, dealing first with the Orakzais and later with the Afridis. These operations were long and difficult, but eventually successful, and by March 1898 all the tribes from the Tochi northwards had submitted and the Khyber was reoccupied."

The storming of the heights of Dargai, near which we had passed over the Pass of the Chagra Kotal, is perhaps the most famous incident of the whole campaign.

Again, Azim-Ullah said that not since 1897 had English been seen there. "They only come fighting—or as prisoners," he added significantly. "You alone have come as neither—you have come as a guest." We discussed when and how it would be possible to bring Miss Ellis down. One man suggested it would be easier to get me through to her next day; and another said, "She may come through to-night." I could get but vague answers as to how she would come and who would fetch her. Were the khans going to fetch her, I must somehow go

too, in disguise if they wished, as a man ; but no, it would not be thus we would get her, they agreed.

It grew cold and the time came to break the fast, and we all went in. I was not allowed to get out any of my stores or tinned food, for I was to dine with one or two of the khans. My orderly asked if he should get spoon and fork from my lunch-basket.

"No, she will eat as us ; she is to-day an Afridi," replied Muhammad Akbar.

We had a delicious "palao" of curry, rice, and meat, helping ourselves with our fingers from the one dish. We dined in the room I was to use for the night—a room like that of the khan's, low and windowless, dark but for the open door, with a hard, beaten-mud floor, two string bedsteads, and guns, knives, pistols, clothes, and quaint odds and ends hanging about on nails in the walls. A small wooden ladder in the corner led up by a trap-door into the upper storey of the watch-tower overhead, where during the night I heard regular stealthy footsteps as of someone with bare feet keeping a constant look-out, first from one vantage-point and then another.

The Rissaldar again returned from the Mullah's house, to say it was true Miss Ellis was to be brought down and might even come through that night. I had a second bed ready in case she should come, and waited dozing, wondering if all the time she were drawing nearer through the night, and if there was any danger for her in doing so.

For the Mullah had at last agreed to coerce the gang to reasonable terms, and once decided, he was not slow to act.

It was about 10 p.m. that night that he had summoned Ajab and Shahzada the murderers, and dispatched them with three of his sheiks or personal followers, with peremptory orders to bring the captive immediately down to his house that she might be under the protection of the ziarat. None of the khans on our side went to fetch her; this part of the proceedings was accomplished "by trick."

Three a.m. came, and I thought since she had not arrived there could be no chance of her having started, and so settled down, fully dressed, to sleep, thinking as the next day might be much more trying than this had been, rest was necessary.

I was aroused exactly at five, to find the three khans standing by my bed.

"The girl has come ; she is here. We tell you this for your comfort, but you cannot go to her yet," said the Rissaldar in English. I was astounded at this, and I remember saying, "What ? she is *here* ? and I have neither fetched her nor welcomed her ? and you have let me sleep ! I must go to her at once." But they were persistent. "She is safe in the Mullah's house. You cannot go ; the Mullah will be angry." So I got up and walked about in the courtyard, and watched the dawn, feeling very impatient at the enforced delay, and at having to be so very diplomatic in our dealings with the Mullah.

Later that day I heard that Miss Ellis had been roused at about midnight by her captors, for another weary midnight march ; but they had taken a letter to her from Kuli Khan, whom I had not yet seen, saying she was coming to safety, and that an English memsahib had arrived to be with her. With the letter had been sent a khaki riding-habit and other clothes, which she at once put on. She was brought down most

of the eight miles carried on his back by Gul Akbar, the youngest of the gang and son of Sultan Mir ; and reached the Mullah's house in Khanki Bazar at three in the morning. No information of this at the time reached me. She was there first seen by Kuli Khan, who was in the Mullah's house as his guest ; he then took her to his room and made her roughly comfortable in the blankets he had brought for his own use.

And then at seven o'clock the khans said permission had been obtained and I might join her. Wearing my chaddar, I quickly followed them down the stony hillside to the Mullah's house below, and entered by the door where yesterday I had been refused admission. We passed the Mullah in the entrance, looking surly, I thought, but he spoke to no one. Going round the base of the big solid stone watch-tower, into the narrow courtyard built in the same style as Azim-Ullah's house above, and on to an open door at the end on the right, I went in.

I was with Miss Ellis at last, and it was good.

She was lying on a bed, tired out, but in no way hurt ; and wonderfully fit and

brave, considering all she had been through during the last eight days. She indicated to me the three murderers who sat guarding their charge, and staring at us while we talked. Some six men were in the room, these three and three of our friends, for the Rissaldar and Kuli Khan had stayed with us.

Miss Ellis's Story

Miss Ellis then told me her experiences.

At the time of the tragic occurrence at Kohat in the early hours of Saturday, April 14, she, wearing only her night attire and with bare head and feet, was—she said—hurried out of the bungalow by the raiders on foot across the fields and up into the hills overlooking the Kohat Road. The whole of the first day they lay up high on the hillside above the road, she hatless in the shade of a rock, her captors on the alert, watching through field-glasses the motors and troops which were passing up and down the road in search of them. Down in the night, the reverse side of those same hills, across the Kohat-Peshawar road, actually walking along it for two hundred yards,

then turning westwards into the heart of the hills, walking by night and lying up by day, she was soon entirely out of reach.

One of the gang gave her his dirty coat and a chaddar, and they procured for her coarse native-woven socks with leather soles, so that her feet were not cut or injured. For five days this arduous tramp continued, till they were at snow-level, and with insufficient food and clothes and no bedding she suffered intensely from the cold. Wandering approximately eighty miles over the hills, they thus arrived at Ajab's house six to eight miles from Khanki Bazar at the head of the Khanki Valley, and there she was hidden for three days in the house of Sultan Mir. No news whatever of her whereabouts could be heard. From his house at the order of her captors and at her own wish she wrote the letters which were brought to me on our arrival at Khanki. In these she showed good heart; but she was naturally tired and exhausted from lack of food and clothes and worn out with suspense and complete ignorance of what her fate was likely to be.

“I am keeping my strength up as much

as possible," she wrote, " and I hope daily to be rescued."

The room where we were was large, but low and rather damp, as the walls had recently been plastered with fresh mud ; and a pile of mud and straw was still standing in the corner. It contained two bedsteads ; and when my orderly brought down the luggage, we made ourselves comfortable and had tea, and I took note of the members of the gang whom I had not seen before. Ajab Khan, dark for a Pathan, with hooked nose and black beard, was heavy and somewhat detached in attitude. His brother, however, was very different ; a typical Pathan, with characteristic features—high cheek-bones, aquiline nose, a light complexion, cunning expression, hard quick eyes. His was, in a word, a bad face. Shahzada was very evidently the leader and the actor ; he had shown himself to be the dominating spirit of the gang throughout the retreat from Kohat ; and it was his hand that had committed the dastardly murder. Gul Akbar was much younger than the other two, and evidently under their orders. All wore the ordinary dark grey of the Afridi dress.

I wished at this time to take Miss Ellis back with me to the house of Azim-Ullah, who had proved himself to be a genuine friend. It was decided, however, that we were safest where we were ; both to ourselves and to our enemies the neutral ground of the Mullah's house afforded the completest sanctuary, both parties being equally his guests.

The next thing was to signal the good news and to write the report. When Moghal Baz and I did this, Ajab and Shahzada seated themselves beside us, making no comments but watching and listening intently. When this was dispatched, we got them to leave us, and settled down for a rest. Our friends came at intervals to see if they could do anything further for us, and to announce that a jirga was again being held. For Moghal Baz Khan and Kuli Khan now felt that so far our difficulties had been successfully surmounted. It was true that as things were a bargain had yet to be struck with Ajab and Shahzada ; true also that the Mullah was unlikely definitely to use his influence to coerce them further ; but the pressing danger of Miss

Ellis's disappearance into "the blue," of her prolonged detention beyond the reach of political pressure, and of the menace thereby involved to her health if not her life—this at least was finally and completely dissolved.

The courtyard was practically deserted and the place quiet and sleepy, when, about three-thirty in the afternoon, quite suddenly and without warning, the four members of the gang, Ajab, Shahzada, Gul Akbar, and Haida Shah, appeared as it seemed from nowhere, though fully armed as usual, and in an excited, perturbed condition burst straight into our room.

"We have a request," said Shahzada to me in Pushtu. "You must write a letter at once. An army has come up from the Khyber direction and will fire our houses. Write now and stop it."

Now, no Pathan enters a woman's room in that way, however urgent the reason may be; so I remained standing and said that I would neither write nor speak with them inside, and they must come out into the courtyard and explain. Not knowing at the moment if there was any truth in their statement, and as I had no one on the spot

to ask, to gain time I said—while promising to write—“What does a woman know of armies? I came only to look after the girl.” Upon which Shahzada turned on me, and the following conversation, of which this is an exact translation, ensued.

“She does not need you; she is not ill: she is all right.”

To this I replied, “That is for me to say.”

“You—who are you? You can do nothing. What authority have you? The authority is mine,” he jerked out.

I could see something had occurred which altered the situation. That Shahzada was very angry there was no doubt. Whether he had gained some fresh support, or whether things had gone against him, and being consequently afraid he thought he would scare us, I did not know. Rather suspecting the latter was the case, I told him he must not speak to me like that. I felt tempted to say more; but they all proceeded to talk loudly and at once.

I signalled to my orderly, who had come up, to fetch the Rissaldar quickly; and asked the men how they expected me to understand when they all talked at the same

time and in Pushtu. Shahzada still refused to come out, and I to discuss the matter till he did. Whereupon they all got up. Shahzada pushed me out at the door by which I was standing, and he was followed by the other two, leaving Haida the Punjabi on guard over Miss Ellis, who was in bed in the dark room. I realised at the time that he was the one who mattered least, since he was not a Pathan, and entirely under the command of Shahzada.

Once outside the door, Shahzada closed and latched it. This could hardly be allowed, so I opened the door widely, telling Miss Ellis that it was all right, and we were just talking outside.

"*You* are the cause of the trouble," he said. "Why are you here? You will not be allowed to go back to her, but will be kept separate."

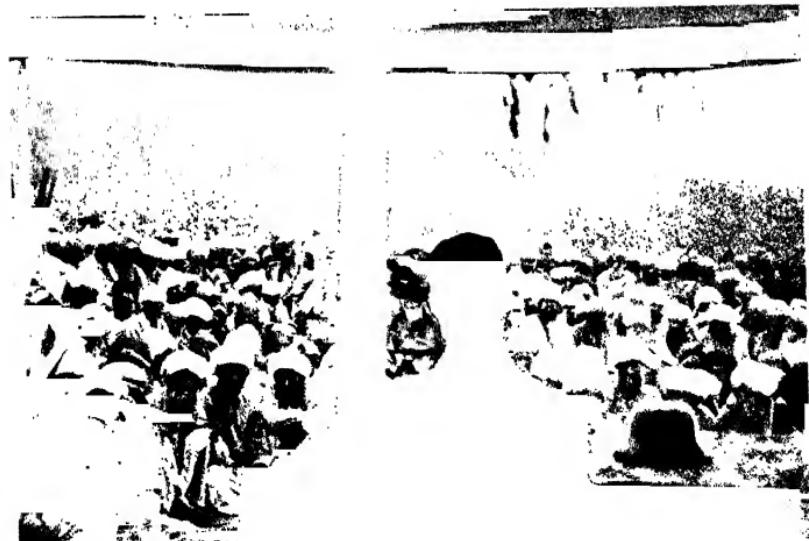
"Have I come all this way to see the girl and go?" I replied.

At that moment a man rushed up, breathlessly saying: "It is too late—fighting has begun."

Shahzada, angry and shaking, said, "Now it is too late. Our houses are burned. Our



MRS. STARR (*standing*) AND MISS ELLIS (*seated*) IMMEDIATELY
AFTER HER RESCUE.



SIR JOHN MAFFEY AT SHINAWARI, ADDRESSING THE MOST
IMPORTANT AFRIDI JIRGA EVER HELD.

women are killed." And as he spoke the Khans arrived. Apparently they had heard a commotion arising from the direction of the room allotted to us, and hurried up to find Ajab, Shahzada, and myself having our heated conversation in the courtyard. All four of the gang turned upon them, accusing them of treachery, complaining that while they had brought the girl to Khanki Bazar at the bidding of the Mullah, the Khyber Afridi lashkars were at the moment engaged behind their backs in maltreating their families and burning down their houses in Jawaki country.

The explanation of this incident of the intrusion of the gang, I learned later, was that the Khyber Afridis under Zaman Khan, to whom I have already referred, were advancing on Sultan Mir and Ajab's houses, where Miss Ellis had been till a few hours before, with the object of destroying them. The Khans took them into the opposite room ; while I sat on a chair in our doorway to see what would happen next ; and after some further argument Shahzada and Ajab, still excited, were taken off and hauled before the Mullah, I remaining with Miss Ellis.

To him Moghal Baz vigorously protested against the unceremonious treatment to which I had been subjected. Kuli Khan further describes the scene :

“ Entirely unable to restrain his resentment, the impulsive Shahzada raised his voice, and called Heaven to witness that it was under the instigation of the Mullah himself that this treachery had been worked upon them. The people who pressed around were strangely moved by this amazing outburst. One or two were tempted feebly to voice a protest, but the majority stood silent, as though expecting the sacrilegious one to be struck down where he stood by a blast from Heaven !

“ The tension was snapped by Mullah Mahmud himself, who turned upon the offender and opened upon him a torrent of abuse, laying upon him, upon Ajab, and upon all their associates, a curse passionate and blasting ; and harshly ordered him from his presence. The sheikhs came forward to hustle them out into the courtyard, but the stricken men cringed before the Mullah. Removing their turbans from their heads, they laid them at his feet and besought forgiveness

and revocation of the curse ; nor could they be dragged from his presence till the Mullah had grudgingly recalled his words."

At the moment when it had happened I little realised that our stormy interview with the raiders was to decide the issue for us. We did not see them any more and were definitely free of the gang's control, for Ajab and his companions were in no position now to hold out for fantastic terms. Under the blighting influence of the Mullah's hostility they agreed, after some half-hearted argument, to surrender their captive in exchange for the release by Government of two men of the Bosti-Khel section who were held in the Kohat jail. These latter were merely thieves, not murderers, and men of no special account. These terms the Rissaldar had been authorised to accept ; and he accordingly sent instructions to the Afridi lashkars then gathered among the turreted village fortresses of the Tirah Jawaki to refrain from molesting the gang, but to remain at hand in readiness for instant action until such time as we should have crossed the Border and safely entered the Kohat district.

We could not leave till the exchange prisoners arrived, or at least till news came that they were well on their way. But now that we were free we went out and sat and walked in the enclosed courtyard, where several of the photographs were then taken by myself and by Muhammad Akbar, who knew all about photography.

There were constant visits from would-be patients, till quite late into the evening, and again next morning until we actually left. Of course one could do little more than give temporary treatment, but even this they were really grateful for, since there is not a doctor or a hospital in the whole of Tirah. The native treatment is crude in the extreme, generally doing more harm than good ; and the law of the land comes to be more or less the natural survival of the fittest. A little child of four was brought to me urgently needing an operation. I pressed the anxious grandmother who was with him to come down to Peshawar, and though he had been ill for months with a big cancerous sore, he would probably get quite well there. I might as well have suggested that she should go to far Wilayat (England)—to her it was out of

the question. I treated a number of sore eyes with lotions, etc., and altogether during my stay in Khanki and on the road I was able to give relief of sorts to some thirty persons, including two of the Mullahs.

The Mullah Abdul Haq was not well all the time, and I kept him going on pills which relieved his trouble, so that he was able to ride the whole journey up and down with us. Being a mullah, he never spoke to me, a woman, even regarding his ailment, but he sent his servant to describe his symptoms and tell me how he was progressing. Since the fast was on, he was not able to take a single pill during the day, but sandwiched them in between his two meals at night. Indeed on our last night I was roused at three in the morning by my orderly and the Mullah's attendant at the door, to say as he was feeling so much better he would be glad if he might have yet more pills "to eat" before daylight. He never thanked me in person, but that was hardly to be expected.

Few until they have lived in other lands have any idea of the position women hold —apparently as a matter of course. Every

Eastern religion degrades woman, and Islam more than any other. This is a bold statement ; but the more one knows, not of the books of a religion so much as of the life of the people professing it, the more one finds it true. Islam preaches no equality of the sexes. A man may have three wives or four, since the Prophet did, and is of greater importance if he can afford to do so. For a man to divorce his wife is the simplest thing in the world, and redress almost impossible. It is by no means uncommon for a woman to come to our hospital whose nose has been cut off by her husband, asking to have a new nose made. It may have been done by her man in a fit of temper. She is his property, so he has a perfect right to do it. Or, if she has done some wrong act, she gets more than her punishment, for such a disfigurement is equal to immediate divorce ; she is dishonoured for life, and may not return to what was her home.

A woman is a chattel, a piece of property, possibly an attractive plaything. True, she has authority and influence in her own sphere as she grows older ; but the home as we know it is not known where Islam rules.

Equal freedom, equal education, equal rights between man and woman, even in these days, do not exist except among the small student class who have come under Western influence, and this because under the law of Mohammed woman is a lesser creation than man. That is why it is not a thing to debate "whether they want Christianity or not"—"whether their own religion is good enough for them or not." There is much in every religion that is of the light. But it *is* up to British women, and nothing less than a matter of honour, to give *back* to the East the true position of womanhood, that we hold directly as a result of that religion which came to us *from* the East long ago. Christianity deals with social problems, not by stirring up rebellion, but by gradually leavening society, so that the direct result is men learn to look on slavery, child-marriage, polygamy, and other evils with shame, whether they call themselves Christians or not. As no stream can rise higher than its source, so the life of any people will be as high as their religious tenets take them, and no higher. We do not say there is not much that is evil in our Christian land,

partly as a result of that very freedom of life which we hold essential ; but the vast difference remains that in the East impurity is carried on in the name of religion, in the West it is in spite of the pure white religion of the Christ—and the difference is infinite. The women of England must show what woman's true freedom is, because under Christian law and Christian ideals alone does that freedom perfectly exist. The women of the West who spend their years in the East have, because of their unique position, vast responsibilities, vast opportunities—and the women of the East see, observe, and judge.

Towards evening of that same day, the 22nd, the Mullah Hamid Akhunzada sent for me. Akhunzada is a religious family title. There are two Mullahs in Khanki Bazar, brothers, both Akhunzadas : the one younger in years, but, as I was told, greater in "honour" and more "spiritual" ; and his brother, who, though older in years, was considered a "worldly" mullah. The latter mixed in politics and life in general, and was consequently more human and, I thought, more gentlemanly ! The former was alto-

gether above speaking to a woman, and it was in his house we were kept.

I accordingly went up with the messenger of the Mullah Abdul Hamid, and found him suffering from rheumatism in his ankles, to which I applied what remedies I had to ease the pain and swelling. He was full of questions and conversation, and I sat opposite him talking for over an hour, he on the only chair, the seat of honour, I on a string bed with his wife beside me. He had never seen an English woman, and I thought it was important he should be favourably impressed. We conversed on all manner of subjects. He had never been to India, but had quite a store of general knowledge.

His wife brought me tea and "khir" (sweet spiced rice), almonds and raisins, and what I could not eat was tied up in a silk handkerchief and sent back with me. Of course no khans had accompanied me, as we were in the balcony of the women's apartments. I greeted and treated some six women and several children, and their excitement at my visit was pathetic. The pir, a "holy man," and a relation of the Mullah's, knew a little English, and insisted on writing

down the names of the medicines in case they needed them in the future. One thought of the narrowness of the outlook of this community ; for instance, though the view from our balcony over the hills was extensive, one young girl had told me in answer to my question that she never went beyond the roof or the courtyard below. Had she been a poor man's wife, she would have been free to wander and work in the fields ; or had she been born into one of the wandering tribes, she would have been able to march and manage the camels with the men, and take her share in the work of the caravan ; in either case she would have had less monotony and probably more pleasure in her existence.

On leaving, the Mullah handed me a ten-rupee note, which I explained would go to the hospital in payment for the medicines, and asked me to be sure and come up again with a full equipment of drugs and stay longer in the country. He promised to guarantee my comfort and safety. I tried to point out how gladly we would come, but how they themselves by their treachery and warlike ways close the country even to those

who would work for their good. He said what a pity it was they themselves were not a peaceable people, but that an Afridi could not be altered !

So much had happened during that Sunday, the 22nd, and how different was our view of life that evening from what it was in the morning when, till 7 a.m., we had not even met ! One did not find it easy to sleep that night, though there were few interruptions, partly because one was so happy, partly because the fleas were so many !

Next morning, Monday, the 23rd, we set out on our return journey, but not till ten o'clock, when a messenger brought the news that the two prisoners whom we had agreed on our side to release were well on their way to meet us. Just before leaving the Mullah's house he, accompanied by Moghal Baz, came to our room, and without speaking a word to us he handed a beautiful Pathan necklace of Turkish gold coins to the Rissaldar to give Miss Ellis. For this the Rissaldar thanked him warmly on Miss Ellis's behalf, and I also thanked him, for I thought it was a pity that he should think a woman could

not speak to him. I believe we left the valley, and even the fanatical mullahs themselves, more friendly than we found them.

We walked out of the village, since to please our friends and in all due respect we must go on foot past the ziarat. The people collected in the path and on the roofs and at the doors of the huts at the lower end of Khanki Bazar.

Mounting, we rode along the track I had come only three days before, not even definitely knowing if Miss Ellis was alive. We rode along the left bank of the river for a few miles. Afterwards through the heat of the day for some seven or eight hours Miss Ellis travelled comfortably on a stretcher brought with bearers for the purpose. The return journey of nearly thirty miles we accomplished in eleven hours, stopping once for half an hour to get a meal, sitting under a deserted roofed-in hut for shade. It was quite hot work.

Half-way down we met the two exchanged prisoners in charge of their guard, Hchangir, the Revenue Collector. Passing through the village of Na'amat Salah, where I had stayed my first night in independent territory, the

children ran out to greet me, and the women, catching hold of my horse's bridle, pressed us to stay once more a night in their village. I can hear still their shouts of "Come again some day" as we rode on, and I wish the opportunity may come to do so.

The long, steep climb up from the dry river-bed to the top of the Chagra Kotal took longer than we had anticipated, and it was quite dark by the time we reached the summit and dropped over into British territory once again. The horses stumbled on the steep, stony, downhill path, so we were obliged to walk, the intermittent flash of my small electric torch being all the light we had to see our steps. We afterwards heard this light coming over the pass and down the descent had been seen from the fort and was the first intimation that we were really on our way.

Suddenly turning a corner on the lower slopes of the hill, we came upon Sir John Maffey, the Chief Commissioner, and the Deputy Commissioner of Kohat, who had come out to meet us, and together we all walked the last mile into Shinawari Fort,

where Major Ellis was waiting to welcome his daughter.

It was then 9 p.m., and a good supper and a good night seemed quite a luxury, for Miss Ellis had been in the wilds for ten days, and I had not had my clothes off since leaving Peshawar.

The next morning there were many hand-shakes. We seemed to have got to know well these friends of so few days. The Afridi may be by nature treacherous, cruel, and cunning, and yet be very warm-hearted. If it was Afridis who had committed the crime, it was Afridis who had gone with me to work the rescue. Perhaps the Afridi may best be described by the old doggerel, "When he is good, he is very very good ; but when he is bad, he is —— horrid ! "

After many salaams and farewells we entered the Chief Commissioner's motor and drove straight through to Government House, Peshawar.

A day or two after this an old Afridi woman met me in the hospital.

"Where have you been these days, O Memsahib ? " she demanded.

"In Tirah, O Mother," I replied.

"Is it true?" she questioned. "I had heard so. Now you are as one of us; none but Afredis walk abroad in Tirah."

This, I felt, was a compliment worth having.

On looking back, the object of our journey seems to have been wonderfully quickly accomplished. I was but four days in independent territory instead of the fortnight that had seemed likely. This was because the lightning scheme of the Chief Commissioner was a new and a bold stroke, and because help was sent from three directions, each arriving in the nick of time and each playing some part in the final result.

Behind that again, for those who have eyes to see and who have made the great discovery that the unseen things *are* the most real and the invisible forces the stronger, is the power by which "more things are wrought than this world dreams of." Prayer-force is the highest form of telepathy used for a purpose. That fact was a real and a solid support of which at the time I felt somehow conscious; though it was not till some weeks later that from about twenty separate places letters came which said that

before they learnt from the newspapers that I had gone to help Miss Ellis, they were sure I was in some way in the thing, and so were concentrating on me to back me up. Was it a chance that it was a Sunday we were kept in the Mullah's house, the one day of the week when large numbers of people in India and in England, in public or in private, were praying for us ? Under those circumstances was it likely we should fail ?

Though the actual culprits in the Kohat crime have escaped into Afghanistan with their lives, so far eluding their due punishment, measures to exact retribution have been going on. Tirah has been shaken by the storm of Government anger that burst over it in consequence of the recent event. Not many days after the rescue was accomplished, fifteen aeroplanes in formation flew over Tirah, making the Afridis realise the power of the Raj.

A combined great council of all the tribes was summoned by the Chief Commissioner to assemble at Shinawari on May 12. A photograph of this unique gathering—the largest jirga that has probably ever met—faces page 228 ; and the expressions on the

faces of the tribal elders are a study. They listened to some of the plainest speaking that such an assembly has ever heard, when Sir John Maffey reminded them that we had now cause for a badla (feud) with *them* of the worst type—the badla over a woman, which by their own custom must be paid in blood.

Unique in Frontier history is the document to which the mullahs and the maliks of the tribes on that occasion set their seal. Translated, it runs as follows :

“ We, the chief elders and representatives of the Afridi and Orakzai clans, hereby declare that Ajab Khan, Shahzada, Gul Akbar, Sultan Mir, Haida Shah, who are the enemies of the British Government, are likewise our own enemies. The five men mentioned above and their families shall from now onwards never enter our country. If they should enter the country or any of our sections, it shall be the duty of the section in question to capture them and hand them over to the British Government. If any section or individual of our tribes should give them shelter or passage, it is our

prayer that the Government shall take such action as it may deem suitable, whether by means of aeroplanes or otherwise.

“ Dated the 26th Ramzan Hijri, 1341,
equivalent to May 13, 1923.”

Here follow the seals of the mullahs and the chiefs.

The jirga further listened to the full terms imposed, which included the destruction of the settlement in the Alisherzai country which had last given shelter to the gang, and the burning down of the village in the Bosti-Khel Valley where the gang had first settled after the Kohat outrage. This was to drive home to the tribesmen the penalty of harbouring and helping offenders against the British law. Heavy fines upon the tribes for the past acts of the gang and for the tribal offence of giving them passage were also part of the punishment. Still further, the telephone is to go through the Kohat Pass ; to guard them new Frontier police posts are being put up in the pass, in independent territory itself.

The last but far from least is the new order that outlaws, up till now safe and out of

reach when over the Border, can from this time be demanded, and wherever they are hidden, must be given up by the tribes of the district. On one occasion before this new order of things, a Punjabi outlaw—the identical Haida Shah, later one of the notorious Kohat gang, and even then wanted by the Government—deliberately came up to the motor of the Chief Commissioner as he drove through the Kohat Pass. He spoke to him with a boldness born of a confidence in the British to keep their word ; he knew well that he could not be touched save on British soil, and the road itself is neutral ground.

This new law is the direct outcome of that fatal attack in April last on an English home in Kohat ; and in future there is no doubt that it will do much to promote quietness and peace among the law-abiding citizens of the North-west Frontier.

THE END

Glossary

AFRIDI.—(Pronounced “A-free-dee.”) Name of the Pathan tribes belonging to Tirah.

AKHUNZADA.—A Mohammedan religious family title.

AMIR.—The ruler of Afghanistan.

ANCHAR, LAKE.—A small but very beautiful lake in the Kashmir Valley, near Srinagar.

ASBAB.—Luggage ; baggage in general.

BADLA.—(Pronounced “ budla.”) Exchange or revenge ; it is the blood-feud or vendetta, practised by the Pathan.

BAGH.—A “garden,” meaning any little green enclosure.

CHADDAR.—Cotton sheet or shawl, used as a wrap in the day and as covering at night.

CHENAR.—The famous tree of Kashmir, like the Canadian maple.

CHORTAN.—Memorial to a dead lama ; the lama is cremated and the ashes may be inside.

CHULLI.—Wild apricot. Chuli-scampo—the Place of Apricots.

DAK.—The post, or mails ; pronounced as “dark.”

DAK-BUNGALOW.—A rest-house by the road for travellers ; so-called because originally the stopping-places for the mails.

DAK-RUNNER.—Mail carriers in out-of-the-way districts.

DEGCHI.—A cooking-pot, of brass, copper, or aluminium.

DUNGA.—A wooden boat, straw-matting roof; used for luggage, etc. Paddled along.

FERINGHI.—A term for any European; may be used slightly.

GOMPA.—A Buddhist monastery in Ladakh.

INSHAH ALLAH.—“By the will of God,” or “With the help of God”—a common Mohammedan exclamation.

ISLAM.—Or Mohammedanism, the religion of the Prophet.

JEHAD.—(Pronounced “jahard.”) “A holy war,” i.e. against the Europeans or Infidels.

JIRGA.—A council of the tribal elders. This may be appointed by the tribesmen themselves, or on the British India Border by the civil officer.

KALIMA.—The Moslem creed, “There is no God but one God, and Mohammed is the Prophet of God.”

KANDAO.—A pass.

KHAN.—(Pronounced as “carn.”) Lord or chief; a title, or often merely part of a man’s name, or “Mr.”

KHAN BAHADUR.—A title conferred on Indians by Government in recognition of services rendered.

KHEL.—A Pathan tribe or clan.

KOTAL.—The flat summit of a pass.

LADAKHI.—Inhabitant of Lesser Tibet or Ladakh.

LAMA.—Buddhist priest of Tibet.

LAMBADAR.—Head-man of a village or place visited by travellers who is made responsible for providing necessities.

LANGAR.—The public kitchen attached to the ziarat, where the mullah's guests are fed at his expense.

LASHIKAR.—Army; applied in Afghanistan to a small body of men going out from the tribes for war-like purposes.

MALIK.—The head-man of a village or tribe.

MAUND.—A weight which is equal to 80 pounds.

MOSLEM.—To do with the religion of Islam or Mohammedanism.

MULLAH.—A Moslem priest.

MULLAH-BANG.—A mullah's call to prayer at dawn.

MURGHIAN-KANDAO.—The pass over the Murghan Mountains.

NAMDAH.—A ravine in the mountains.

Ó MÁNI PADMI HUN.—The most commonly used Buddhist prayer.

ORAKZAI.—A section of Pathan clans and the district they inhabit.

PERAK.—The national head-dress of the women of Ladakh.

PALAO.—A favourite dish of meat, rice, spices, raisins, and sweet flavourings.

PATHAN.—(Pronounced “put-harn.”) The general term for the people, composed of many tribes, inhabiting the hill-country between British India and Afghanistan proper.

PUSHTU.—(Pronounced “pash-tu.”) The language of the Pathans.

QAZI.—A teacher or judge; used of one preparing to be a mullah.

QURAN.—The sacred book of Mohammedans.

RAJ.—Kingdom; used of the British Empire.

RAMAZAN.—The annual Moslem fast, lasting a month.

RAWAL PINDI.—A large military station from which the main road leaves for Kashmir.

RISSALDAR.—A title in the Indian Army.

SAHIB.—Literally “master,” or “gentleman”; a term of respect applied to an Englishman or anyone of position.

SALAAM.—The usual greeting; literally “peace.”

SERAI.—The courtyard of an inn where guests are put up. The name given to the family wards of the hospital, where relations may stay in with the patient.

SHEIKH.—Personal attendant of a mullah, or his disciple.

SHIKARA.—A tiny boat, to hold four or five people, paddled.

SIRKAR.—The Government.

SKUSHOK.—The head lama of a monastery in Ladakh, considered to be an incarnation of some former great lama.

TANGI.—A narrow defile.

TAT.—A small, sturdy hill-pony.

TEHSILDAR.—Government official, who superintends taxes and affairs in general in a given district.

URDU.—Or Hindustani.

WILAYAT.—England, or Europe generally.

YAKDAN.—Leather-covered box for travelling; so-called because originally used for carrying baggage on yaks’ backs.

ZIARAT.—A shrine; the grave of “a holy man,” usually near a mosque and in charge of a mullah. Always a place of pilgrimage and supposed healing.

ZOGI LA.—The 11,000-foot pass, over which runs the main route to Lesser Tibet from Kashmir.

ZOII.—A hybrid; like a yak, but with shorter hair, more like a cow.

Ā.—Pronounced long, as “ah.”

I.—Pronounced ee, as in A-free-dee.

